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HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF
FERDINAND AND ISABELLA
THE CATHOLIC

ALSO BY PRESCOTT

HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF PERU
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HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA THE CATHOLIC

BY

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT

ABRIDGED AND EDITED BY
C. HARVEY GARDINER

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS
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For my students

EDITOR'S PREFACE

'I have great pleasure, at last,' one Bostonian wrote to his fellow historian on December 25, 1837, 'in sending you their Catholic Highnesses, who keep their Christmas in Boston....' Culminating more than a decade of labour, the publication of the *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic* marked the début as historian of forty-one-year-old William Hickling Prescott. To a wide circle in Boston he was a happy-go-lucky social extrovert. A more restricted group knew him to be, despite the handicap of limited vision, a keen student of literature as well as an embryonic historian. Jared Sparks, editor and historian, was prominent among those who had encouraged and aided Prescott the historian. Accordingly it was quite appropriate that one of the twenty-five copies of *Ferdinand and Isabella* then bound and available, went, that Christmas morning, with cheery letter, from Prescott to Sparks.

Published simultaneously in Boston and London, by the short-lived American Stationers' Company in the former place and by Richard Bentley in the latter, *Ferdinand and Isabella* quickly won an acceptance which went far beyond presentation copies for the author's intimates. Helping the work to its wider audience were favourable reviews in both America and England. William Howard Gardiner, spreading his praise over eighty-nine pages of the authoritative *North American Review*, lauded Prescott for the breadth of his historical concept, and praised the book for its order, its balance, its unity, its dramatic interest, its authenticity, its literary style.

England reinforced the approbation given so generously by Prescott's own countrymen. Ultra-British and somewhat peevish Richard Ford, himself a leading authority on contemporary Spain, moved from picayunish criticism to fulsome praise, closing his article in the *Quarterly Review* with the declaration that 'Mr Prescott's is by much the first historical work which British America has as yet produced, and one that need hardly fear a comparison with any that has issued from the European press since this century began'. Bilingual Pascual de Gayangos, a Spanish scholar then resident in London, wrote his favourable assessment of Prescott's history for the majestic *Edinburgh Review*. ' . . . Mr Prescott's work is one of the most successful historical productions of our time,' Gayangos wrote, continuing, 'Besides the merits which we have already alluded to, the author possesses one, which, in our opinion, is worth all the rest—that is, impartiality . . . he has written a history without party spirit, and without bias of any sort. In a word, he has, in every respect, made a most valuable addition to our historical literature.'

As the years passed, the sales of *Ferdinand and Isabella* mounted rapidly on both sides of the Atlantic, despite the fact that the three-volume work was very expensive. Both the American price of $7.50 and the English one of 42 shillings were far beyond the reach of ordinary citizens—indeed in excess of the weekly wage of such people in both countries. When his first American publisher collapsed during the nation-wide depression of the late 1830's, Prescott shifted the page plates, which he himself owned, to another Boston house. In the mid-1840's the author contracted with a New York publisher for still bigger printings. A similar publishing phenomenon occurred in England, with Richard Bentley happy to reissue the title time and again.

Before the historian's death in 1859, at least forty-four editions and printings of *Ferdinand and Isabella* had appeared, including translations into German, Spanish and Italian. A century after Prescott's death, and 122 years after initial publication, *Ferdinand and Isabella* boasts 147 editions and printings, at least, in six languages. Significance, not luck, attends that achievement.

Multifacet significance early attached itself to *Ferdinand and Isabella.* It immediately established a new American standard for authoritative history, for Prescott's unusual diligence in ferreting out sources in a variety of languages is richly reflected in the heavy documentation which accompanies his writing. His search for truth carried him triumphantly through a maze of prejudiced and conflicting evidence. Even professional historians of today might agree that, even as he made his point on historical method, Prescott somewhat overdid it. This is evident in the ratio of footnotes to text, many of the notes being unpardonably long. Some of them, because of their tangential nature, are also of questionable value. Prescott's willingness to duplicate, on occasion, the sense or exact words rendered in English in the text by offering it anew in the original language smacks of pedantry. Also, at times, the sheer bulk of his notes is unrelated to his need for authority, seeming instead to be a conscious effort to overwhelm his reader. Like any crusader for the finer things, and Prescott, consciously or not was crusading for higher historiographical standards, he made his case by overstatement of it. None the less *Ferdinand and Isabella* represents an historiographical watershed in America, betokening as it does a new standard of authoritative excellence.

Subject-matter, as well as method, stamped *Ferdinand and Isabella* a significant innovation in America. In that work Prescott made the first American effort to establish an American appraisal of Spain and Spanish culture. English colonial America, founded on Elizabethan attitudes, was blisteringly anti-Spanish. A considerable measure of English patriotism derived from deep-seated and continuing hatred of Spain. The late Stanley T. Williams opened his two-volume study *The Spanish Background of American Literature* with the words 'Hatred of Spain and of all her ways burned deep and lasting in the minds of the English colonists of the seventeenth century. . . .' Cotton Mather and Samuel Sewall studied Spanish because they boastfully planned to bomb the King of Spain out of the Americas with a barrage of Protestant Bibles in that language. Generations later, Prescott, proud of his heritages from both England and New England, was himself immersed in American life that was anti-Spanish—on the Florida issue, in the era of the wars of independence in Latin America.

Prescott, none the less, shed his heritage of prejudice and blazed the trail for a new assessment, an independent American evaluation of Spain and her culture. In so doing, he struck the earliest American blows against the 'Black Legend' of barbarity, greed and obscurantism which, it must be added, distorted the history of Spain in both Europe and America.

Still other kinds of significance relate to *Ferdinand and Isabella*. In conducting his research, Prescott demonstrated the poverty of American libraries, both public and private. Time and again some needed title was not to be found anywhere, at Harvard, at the Boston Athenaeum, or on the library-shelves of his friends. Blessed with money, friends and desire, Prescott amassed a library to meet his own needs. His frustrating delays, however, fortified by the similar experience of others, helped to spark the establishment of richer library collections in this country.

Ferdinand and Isabella established, in addition to its reliability, a new standard of readability for history. Long a serious student of literature, Prescott consciously brought as many of the contemporary assets of literary style to his historical composition as truth, unity, balance, objectivity and other historical requirements permitted. An avid reader and a stanch admirer of Sir Walter Scott, Prescott was much influenced by him. In consequence, Prescott's masterful delineation of character, his romantic approach to historical settings, his utilization of suspense, his concern with 'story-line', resulted in such readable history that it vied successfully with the novels of the day. Just as Prescott's method stamps him a forerunner of the scientific school in American historical writing—and that without benefit of German training, so Prescott's wedding of truth and literary art resulted in history remarkable for its readability.

The three-volume *Ferdinand and Isabella* represented a masterful combination of colourful, detailed narrative and discerning, interpretive generalization. It, too, is a happy combination of strong personalities, dramatic incidents, and social, political, economic, intellectual and institutional developments. For a theme so little known in America and so highly charged with prejudice in the American mind, Prescott serves his readers well by offering a revealing introduction to the complex period of Ferdinand and Isabella.

At least one more trail-blazing historiographical contribution of Prescott in this work must be noted. Not completely satisfied with numerous, lengthy footnotes as proof of his command of his sources, Prescott wrote numerous bibliographical essays about the historians whose works he had employed most. These he tucked in appropriately at the ends of various chapters of the history.

Prescott's first book earned for its author the first significant international reputation gained by an American historian. Of his immediate predecessors, as Irving and Sparks for example, the one lacked thoroughness, the other literary style. Among George Bancroft, John Lothrop Motley and Francis Parkman—with whom Prescott is grouped to round out a quartet of Romantic historians, it is remarkable that none of them won the international reputation that Prescott attained. The foreigner could easily depreciate the super-patriotism of Bancroft, the transparent prejudice of Motley, and the provincial themes of Parkman. In *Ferdinand and Isabella*, Prescott had for his historical canvas one of the magnificent sections of modern history.

In *Ferdinand and Isabella*, one encounters such significant themes as the consolidation of the national state in Spain, the destruction of Moorish power in the Iberian peninsula, the institution of the modern Inquisition, the discovery and colonization of America, the conquest of Naples, and the widening immersion of Spain in general European affairs. There is majesty as well as significance in this study of the emergence of a great nation and state into modern times. Accordingly it appealed to Europeans as few other American historical writings ever have.

The nature of the theme, reinforcing the methodological and literary claims of Prescott, did much to win unstinting acclaim for him. The theme urged, all the more, those early translations into German, Spanish and Italian. It was this theme, long after he had added other titles to his name, that led to Prescott's presentation to Queen Victoria as 'the historian of Ferdinand and Isabella'. This work, more than the others, accounted for the honorary degree from Oxford, and the attendant honours that learned societies heaped upon him. This work, containing every earmark of the mature greatness of Prescott the historian, was indeed a masterwork from early moments following its initial publication.

But, one may ask: What present significance attaches to *Ferdinand and Isabella*?

No fuller, more readable, more authoritative treatment of the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella is available in English. Only two works challenge its eminence sufficiently to deserve comment. Jean Hippolyte Mariéjol's *L'Espagne sous Ferdinand et Isabella: Le Gouvernement, les Institutions et les Moeurs* (Paris, 1892), translated into English by Benjamin Keen, is presently available. Basically, Mariéjol, despite a dependence upon Prescott which exceeds his admission of it, approaches the subject in a manner drastically unlike Prescott. Instead of Prescott's long, detail-laden narrative-interpretive study, Mariéjol wrote a short, tight, institutional-interpretive study. Both wrote exceedingly well and authoritatively, but whereas Spain and her history are seen by Prescott through Ferdinand and Isabella, Spain is seen by Mariéjol through her institutions at the time of Ferdinand and Isabella. Prescott is richer in characterization, dramatic interest and chronological unity; Mariéjol is stronger in institutional analysis, thematic unity, and interpretive synthesis. Prescott, assuming his reader knows nothing (how right he is for most Americans approaching Spanish history!), offers a rich statement of background for the complex period which he proceeds to treat. Mariéjol, assuming his reader is knowledgeable to a considerable degree, well nigh precipitates him into his theme without benefit of author-established perspectives. Essentially, Prescott and Mariéjol are complementary rather than competitive as historians of Ferdinand and Isabella.

The second post-Prescott work in English on the theme of the Catholic Kings is Roger Bigelow Merriman's *Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and in the New* (four vols., New York, 1918–34), now out of print. Merriman's respect for and dependence upon Prescott was so great that he dedicated his work 'To the honoured memory of William Hickling Prescott'. Writing eighty-one years after the initial appearance of *Ferdinand and Isabella*, Merriman confessed, 'Prescott's work still remains the standard authority on the reign of the Catholic Kings'. Nothing has appeared in recent years which would alter that statement.

Yesterday's masterwork, *Ferdinand and Isabella* stands today on merits which stamp it a continuing masterpiece. More than one hundred and twenty years have failed to undermine—rather have underscored its balance, unity, dramatic interest, truth, objectivity and significance. More facts have been unearthed and some interpretations have been modified, but no violence is done to Prescott's fundamental conclusions. From a methodological standpoint—considering it a forerunner of the scientific school of historical writing, and as the initiator of the bibliographical essay—which has known mounting popularity in recent years in lieu of detailed bibliographies, no work has contributed more than *Ferdinand and Isabella* to American historiography. Literary styles have changed and it is not so readable, within the framework of accepted literary practice, as once it was. On that score of readability, however, one of the most enduring of the significances attached to *Ferdinand and Isabella* might impress itself on today's historians: the more one weds literary skill to historical truth, the wider the audience, the greater the impact, the better the chance for immortality.

In view of two facts: first that the other Prescott histories have been abridged often, and second that of all his writings his first history is the only one which Prescott prepared himself to abridge, it is doubly strange that no previous abridgment of *Ferdinand and Isabella* has appeared. Before discussing the standards employed in the present abridgment, a brief word is in order about Prescott's own abridgment.

By the spring of 1841 the American and English success of *Ferdinand and Isabella* had inspired the kind of envy which gave rise to strong rumour that a pirated version of it was in the offing. Threatened by a cheap and shoddy product which would undermine the market for the expensive three-volume editions, Prescott, deciding to beat the pirate at his own game, accordingly undertook to abridge his own work, knowing, of course, that between a cheap unauthorized edition and the author's own abridgment, the latter would hold the market. In June, 1841, the historian brought more energy than enthusiasm to his new chore.

'Nothing but dire necessity of protecting myself from piracy—as the laws cannot protect me,' he confided to his literary memoranda, 'induces me to do this unnatural work—sweating down my full grown offspring to the size of a pigmy. . . .' Aided by his reader-secretary, he performed the distasteful task which he described in his memoranda of July 19, 1841, '*Io triumphe! three weeks & a half* since I first put pen to paper. About one tenth of the vol. written *de novo*,—the rest docked, scissored, sweated, headed & tailed.'

In the course of this unwelcome labour, which was accompanied by contracts for its publication both in Boston and London, enough publicity apparently was given Prescott's intention that the threatening pirate withdrew from the field. Once that withdrawal was firmly established in Prescott's mind, he shelved the idea of issuing the abridgment. Indeed, he seems to have destroyed the abridgment eventually, because it is not among his extant papers, and he was one who made a practice of conserving everything he valued.

From close study of manuscript materials related to Prescott—as the writer prepares a biography of Prescott, it is possible to reconstruct most of the principles upon which he constructed his abridgment. All footnotes and bibliographical essays were deleted. Aside from rewriting approximately forty pages of Introduction, the abridgment was a scissors-and-paste project throughout, which suggests that Prescott did not believe that such a procedure defied the unity and coherence so necessary to any history. In addition, Prescott's correspondents had rained upon him ideas and criticism which he responded to in the abridgment: his invocation of Providence was reduced, his tangential comparison of Isabella with Elizabeth of England was deleted, etc.

The present abridgment has incorporated every known outlook and technique embraced by Prescott in 1841 except that of rewriting portions of the work. In a studied effort to keep Prescott's work in Prescott's words to the greatest degree possible, no condensation through rewriting has been indulged. The only words in the text which are not Prescott's are within square brackets, and there are fewer than ten such words in the entire abridgment. After all, Prescott's greatness lies in his words as well as in his ideas.

In addition to presenting *Ferdinand and Isabella* in Prescott's own words, the abridgment has proceeded along two other fundamentally important lines. Because Prescott had his preferences in subject-matter, he overemphasized some themes. Among these one may include: the love of interest-focusing characters which led him to depict them not only in the chronological progress of their careers but also in detailed full-portrait literary post-mortems; the love of gossip and drama which focuses too much on court intrigue; and the love of battle-pieces which stretches the wars in Granada and Italy to interminable length. These areas, accordingly, have easily admitted of abridgment.

Also, in addition to following Prescott's own abridgment and noting the favourite themes which he over-emphasizes, the abridgment has been fashioned with yet another view in mind: that of attuning a 120-year-old work to present-day concepts of history and historical writing. In reference to content this has meant that with heavier cutting of court life and military action than of social institutions and economic practices, the latter emphases in history, which have arisen largely since Prescott's day, are better served. It is hoped that the work is better balanced because of this effort to bring Prescott across to the modern reader. In reference to sentence structure, two basic changes are introduced: Prescott's long sentences are often converted into shorter ones, and his over-addiction to internal punctuation is restrained somewhat. Incidentally, the overall contraction of text also has brought many long paragraphs within more manageable limits.

The title remains as Prescott styled it. The table of contents is Prescott's with these alterations: the subsidiary headings have been eliminated; some consecutive chapters on a single theme have been consolidated; and the chapters have been renumbered, eliminating the concept which divided the work into two parts. The chapter titles are retained as Prescott established them, except where consecutive chapters on a single subject have been consolidated. In such instances the chapter titles likewise have been consolidated. A much-corrected edition of *Ferdinand and Isabella* produced from the author's original plates has served throughout as the basis of the text.

In sum, the abridgment derives from an abiding respect for Prescott and a lively concern for the modern reader. For pleasant and profitable reading, this abridgment is Prescott as pure as possible.

At Southern Illinois University, the preparation of the final manuscript was furthered by the Division of Research and Projects under the direction of Associate Dean John O. Anderson, and by LaDonna Robinson of that office. That assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

C. HARVEY GARDINER
Carbondale, Illinois
January, 1962

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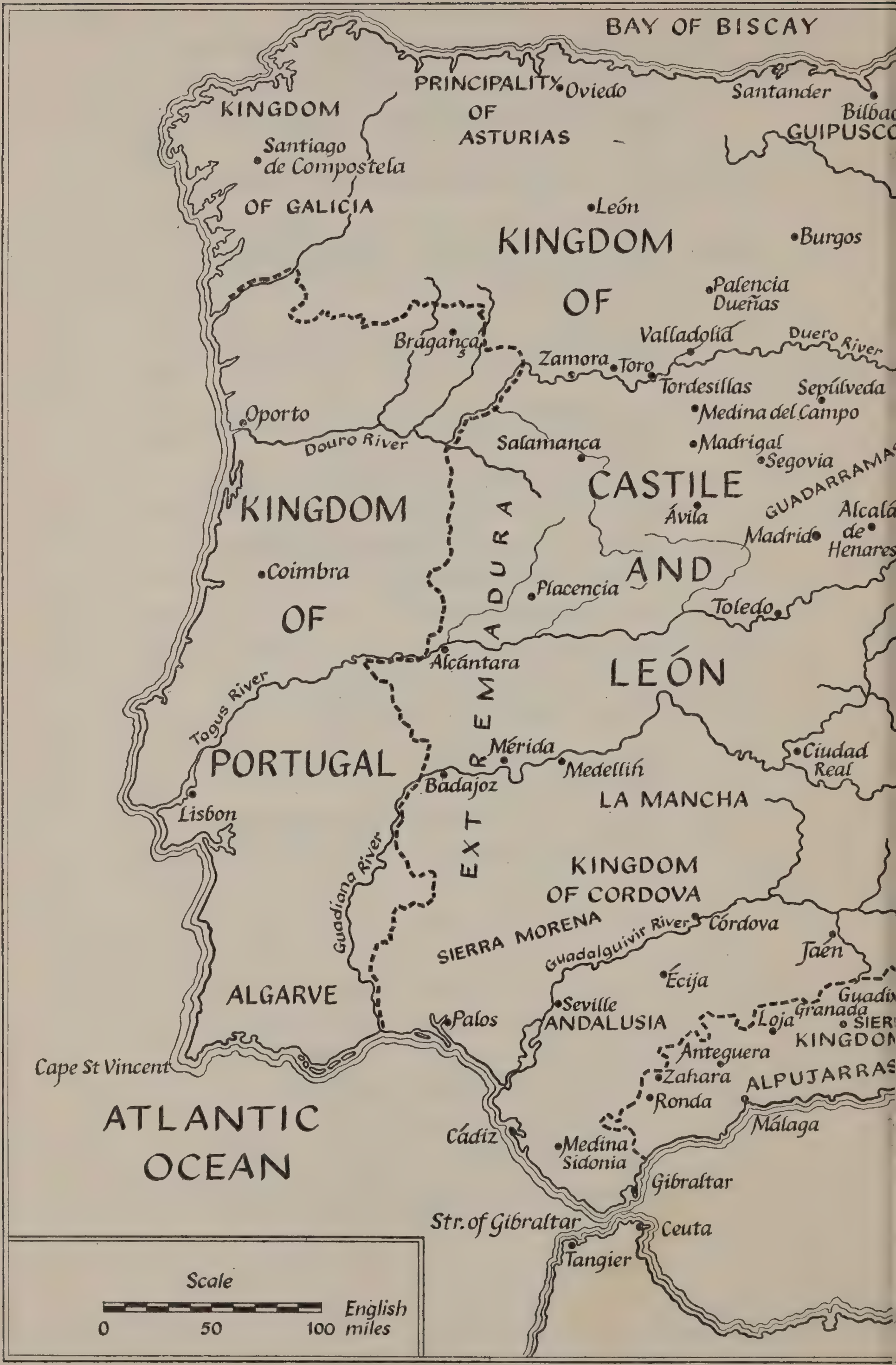
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KINGDOM OF GALICIA
Santiago de Compostela
PRINCIPALITY OF ASTURIAS
Oviedo
Santander
Bilba
GUIPUSC
León
KINGDOM OF CASTILE AND LEÓN
Burgos
Palencia
Dueñas
Valladolid
Duero River
Bragança
Zamora
Toro
Tordesillas
Sepúlveda
Medina del Campo
Oporto
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Badajoz
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Guadiana River
KINGDOM OF CORDOVA
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Córdova
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Écija
ALGARVE
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ALPUJARRAS
Málaga
Cape St Vincent
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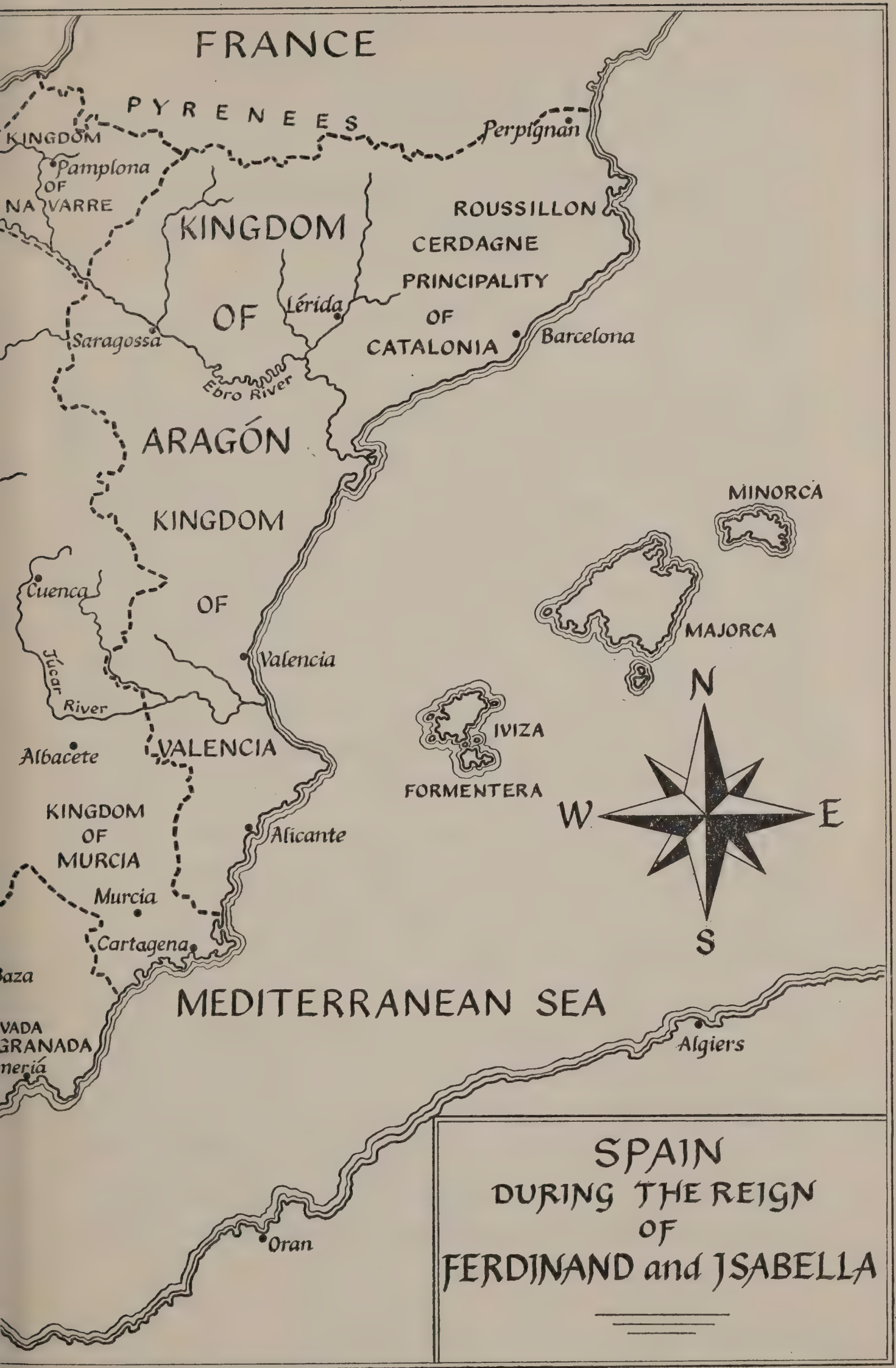

FRANCE
PYRENEES
KINGDOM OF NAVARRE
Pamplona
Perpignan
ROUSSILLON
CERDAGNE
PRINCIPALITY OF CATALONIA
Barcelona
KINGDOM OF ARAGÓN
Lérida
Saragossa
Ebro River
KINGDOM OF VALENCIA
Cuenca
Júcar River
Valencia
Albacete
KINGDOM OF MURCIA
Murcia
Alicante
Cartagena
Baza
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Oran

SPAIN
DURING THE REIGN
OF
FERDINAND and ISABELLA

INTRODUCTION: SECTION I

VIEW OF THE CASTILIAN MONARCHY BEFORE THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

FOR several hundred years after the great Saracen invasion in the beginning of the eighth century, Spain was broken up into a number of small, but independent states, divided in their interests, and often in deadly hostility with one another. It was inhabited by races, the most dissimilar in their origin, religion, and government, the least important of which has exerted a sensible influence on the character and institutions of its present inhabitants. At the close of the fifteenth century, these various races were blended into one great nation, under one common rule. Its territorial limits were widely extended by discovery and conquest. Its domestic institutions, and even its literature, were moulded into the form, which, to a considerable extent, they have maintained to the present day. It is the object of the present narrative to exhibit the period in which these momentous results were effected—the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

By the middle of the fifteenth century, the number of states into which the country had been divided was reduced to four—Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and the Moorish kingdom of Granada. The last, comprised within nearly the same limits as the modern province of that name, was all that remained to the Moslems of their once vast possessions in the Peninsula.

The little kingdom of Navarre, embosomed within the Pyrenees, had often attracted the avarice of neighbouring and more powerful states. But, since their selfish schemes operated as a mutual check upon each other, Navarre still continued to maintain her independence, when all the smaller states in the Peninsula had been absorbed in the gradually increasing dominion of Castile and Aragon.

This latter kingdom comprehended the province of that name, together with Catalonia and Valencia. Under its auspicious climate and free political institutions, its inhabitants displayed an uncommon share of intellectual and moral energy. Its long line of coast opened the way to an extensive and flourishing commerce; and its enterprising navy indemnified the nation for the scantiness of its territory at home by the important foreign conquests of Sardinia, Sicily, Naples, and the Balearic Isles.

The remaining provinces of León, Biscay, the Asturias, Galicia, Old and New Castile, Estremadura, Murcia, and Andalusia, fell to the crown of Castile, which, thus extending its sway over an unbroken line of country from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, seemed by the magnitude of its territory, as well as by its antiquity (for it was there that the old Gothic monarchy may be said to have first revived after the great Saracen invasion), to be entitled to a pre-eminence over the other states of the Peninsula. And, when at length the various states of Spain were consolidated into one monarchy, the capital of Castile became the capital of the new empire, and her language the language of the court and of literature.

We briefly glance at the prominent features in the early history and constitution of the two principal Christian states, Castile and Aragon, previous to the fifteenth century.

The Visigoths who overran the Peninsula, in the fifth century, brought with them the same liberal principles of government which distinguished their Teutonic brethren.

But, while in other countries the principles of a free government were slowly and gradually unfolded, their development was much accelerated in Spain by an event, which, at the time, seemed to threaten their total extinction—the great Saracen invasion at the beginning of the eighth century. The men of higher rank, or of more generous sentiments, who refused to accept a nominal and precarious independence at the hands of their oppressors, escaped from the overwhelming inundation into the neighbouring countries of France, Italy, and Britain, or retreated behind their natural fortresses of the north, the Asturian hills and the Pyrenees, whither the victorious Saracen disdained to pursue them.

Here the broken remnant of the nation endeavoured to revive the forms, at least, of the ancient government. But it may well be conceived how imperfect these must have been under a calamity which, breaking up all the artificial distinctions of society, seemed to resolve it at once into its primitive equality. The monarch, once master of the whole Peninsula, now beheld his empire contracted to a few barren, inhospitable rocks. The noble, instead of the broad lands and thronged halls of his ancestors, saw himself at best but the chief of some wandering horde, seeking a doubtful subsistence, like himself, by rapine. The peasantry, indeed, may be said to have gained by the exchange; and, in a situation in which all factitious distinctions were of less worth than individual prowess and efficiency, they rose in political consequence.

A sensible and salutary influence, at the same time, was exerted on the moral energies of the nation, which had been corrupted in the long enjoyment of uninterrupted prosperity. An entire reformation was necessarily effected in a situation where a scanty subsistence could only be earned by a life of extreme temperance and toil, and where it was often to be sought, sword in hand, from an enemy far superior in numbers. Whatever may have been the vices of the Spaniards, they cannot have been those of effeminate sloth. Thus a sober, hardy, and independent race was gradually formed, prepared to assert their ancient inheritance, and to lay the foundations of far more liberal and equitable forms of government than were known to their ancestors.

At first, their progress was slow and almost imperceptible. The Saracens seemed willing to relinquish the sterile regions of the north to an enemy whom they despised. But, when the Spaniards, quitting the shelter of their mountains, descended into the open plains of León and Castile, they found themselves exposed to the predatory incursions of the Arab cavalry, who, sweeping over the face of the country, carried off in a single foray the hard-earned produce of a summer's toil. It was not until they had reached some natural boundary, as the river Douro, or the chain of the Guadarrama, that they were enabled, by constructing a line of fortifications along these primitive bulwarks, to secure their conquests, and oppose an effectual resistance to the destructive inroads of their enemies.

Their own dissensions were another cause of their tardy progress. The numerous petty states which rose from the ruins of the ancient monarchy seemed to regard each other with even a fiercer hatred than that with which they viewed the enemies of their faith. More Christian blood was wasted in these national feuds than in all their encounters with the infidel.

A century and a half elapsed after the invasion before they had penetrated the Douro, and nearly thrice that period before they had advanced the line of conquest to the Tagus, notwithstanding this portion of the country had been comparatively deserted by the Mahometans. In truth, the early Spaniard was urged by every motive that can give efficacy to human purpose. Pent up in his barren mountains, he beheld the pleasant valleys and fruitful vineyards of his ancestors delivered over to the spoiler, the holy places polluted by his abominable rites, and the crescent glittering on the domes which were once consecrated by the venerated symbol of his faith. His cause became the cause of Heaven. The ancient Castilian was remarkable for his independent resistance of papal encroachment; but the peculiarity of his situation subjected him in an uncommon degree to ecclesiastical influence at home. Priests mingled in the council and the camp, and, arrayed in their sacerdotal robes, not unfrequently led the armies to battle. And, when the Christians fainted in the fight, the apparition of their patron, St James, mounted on a milk-white steed, and bearing aloft the banner of the cross, was seen hovering in the air, to rally their broken squadrons, and lead them on to victory. Thus the Spaniard looked upon himself as in a peculiar manner the care of Providence. He was a soldier of the Cross, fighting not only for his country, but for Christendom. Hence the national character became exalted by a religious fervour.

The long wars with the Mahometans served to keep alive in their bosoms the ardent glow of patriotism; and this was still further heightened by the body of traditional minstrelsy which commemorated in these wars the heroic deeds of their ancestors. A poem like that of the 'Cid', which appeared as early as the twelfth century, by calling up the most inspiring national recollections in connexion with their favourite hero, must have operated powerfully on the moral sensibilities of the people.

The nature of this warfare between two nations, inhabitants of the same country, yet so dissimilar in their religious and social institutions as to be almost the natural enemies of each other, was extremely favourable to the exhibition of the characteristic virtues of chivalry. The Spanish knight became the true hero of romance, wandering over his own land, and even into the remotest climes, in quest of adventures.

Thus patriotism, religious loyalty, and a proud sense of independence, founded on the consciousness of owing their possessions to their personal valour, became characteristic traits of the Castilians.

To the extraordinary position in which the nation was placed may also be referred the liberal forms of its political institutions, as well as a more early development of them than took place in other countries of Europe. From the exposure of the Castilian towns to the predatory incursions of the Arabs, it became necessary, not only that they should be strongly fortified, but that every citizen should be trained to bear arms in their defence. An immense increase of consequence was given to the burgesses, who thus constituted the most effective part of the national militia. To this circumstance, as well as to the policy of inviting the settlement of frontier places by the grant of extraordinary privileges to the inhabitants, is to be imputed the early date, as well as liberal character, of the charters of community in Castile and León. Thus while the inhabitants of the great towns in other parts of Europe were languishing in feudal servitude, the members of the Castilian corporations, living under the protection of their own laws and magistrates in time of peace, and commanded by their own officers in war, were in full enjoyment of all the essential rights and privileges of freemen.

The earliest instance on record of popular representation in Castile occurred at Burgos, in 1169, nearly a century antecedent to the celebrated Leicester parliament. Each city had but one vote, whatever might be the number of its representatives.

The popular branch of the Castilian cortes, very soon after its admission into that body, assumed functions and exercised a degree of power on the whole superior to that enjoyed by it in other European legislatures. It was soon recognized as a fundamental principle of the constitution that no tax could be imposed without its consent. The commons showed a wise solicitude in regard to the mode of collecting the public revenue, oftentimes more onerous to the subject than the tax itself. They watched carefully over its appropriation to its destined uses. They restrained a too prodigal expenditure, and ventured more than once to regulate the economy of the royal household. They kept a vigilant eye on the conduct of public officers, as well as on the right administration of justice, and commissions were appointed at their suggestion for inquiring into its abuses. They entered into negotiation for alliances with foreign powers, and, by determining the amount of supplies for the maintenance of troops in time of war, preserved a salutary check over military operations. The nomination of regencies was subject to their approbation, and they defined the nature of the authority to be intrusted to them. Their consent was esteemed indispensable to the validity of a title to the crown. Finally, they more than once set aside the testamentary provisions of the sovereigns in regard to the succession.

The celebrated *Hermandad*, or Holy Brotherhood, as the association was sometimes called, instead of a regularly organized police, then consisted of a confederation of the principal cities bound together by solemn league and covenant, for the defence of their liberties in seasons of civil anarchy, enforcing their measures by an armed force.

With these immunities, the cities of Castile attained a degree of opulence and splendour unrivalled, unless in Italy, during the Middle Ages. At a very early period, indeed, their contact with the Arabs had familiarized them with a better system of agriculture, and a dexterity in the mechanic arts unknown in other parts of Christendom. On the occupation of a conquered town, we find it distributed into quarters or districts, appropriated to the several crafts, whose members were incorporated into guilds, under the regulation of magistrates and by-laws of their own appointment. The more humble occupations were fostered by a liberal patronage. The excellent breed of sheep, which early became the subject of legislative solicitude, furnished an important staple, which, together with the simpler manufactures, and the various products of a prolific soil, formed the materials of a profitable commerce.

Every new revolution was followed by new concessions on the part of the sovereign, and the popular authority continued to advance with a steady progress until the accession of Henry the Third, of Trastamara, in 1393, when it may be said to have reached its zenith.

The peculiar situation of Castile, which had been so favourable to popular rights, was eminently so to those of the aristocracy. The nobles, embarked with their sovereign in the same common enterprise of rescuing their ancient patrimony from its invaders, felt entitled to divide with him the spoils of victory. Issuing forth, at the head of their own retainers, from their strongholds or castles (the great number of which was originally implied in the name of the country), they were continually enlarging the circuit of their territories, with no other assistance than that of their own good swords.

The higher nobility, or *ricos hombres*, were exempted from general taxation, and the occasional attempt to infringe on this privilege in seasons of great public emergency, was uniformly repelled by this jealous body. They could not be imprisoned for debt; nor be subjected to torture, so repeatedly sanctioned in other cases by the municipal law of Castile. They had the right of deciding their private feuds by an appeal to arms, a right of which they liberally availed themselves. They also claimed the privilege, when aggrieved, of denaturalizing themselves, or in other words, of publicly renouncing their allegiance to their sovereign, and of enlisting under the banners of his enemy. The number of petty states which swarmed over the Peninsula afforded ample opportunity for the exercise of this disorganizing prerogative. They monopolized all the higher offices of state, as those of constable and admiral of Castile, *adelantados* or governors of the provinces, cities, etc. They secured to themselves the grand-masterships of the military orders, which placed at their disposal an immense amount of revenue and patronage. Finally, they entered into the royal or privy council, and formed a constituent portion of the national legislature.

These important prerogatives were of course favourable to the accumulation of great wealth. Their estates were scattered over every part of the kingdom. They resided on them in person, maintaining the state of petty sovereigns, and surrounded by a numerous retinue, who served the purposes of a pageant in time of peace, and an efficient military force in war.

These ambitious nobles did not consume their fortunes, or their energies in a life of effeminate luxury. From their earliest boyhood, they were accustomed to serve in the ranks against the infidel, and their whole subsequent lives were occupied either with war, or with those martial exercises which reflect the image of it. We find them perpetually convulsing the kingdom with their schemes of selfish aggrandizement. Notwithstanding the liberal forms of its constitution, there was probably no country in Europe, during the Middle Ages, so sorely afflicted with the vices of intestine anarchy, as Castile. Their already overgrown power, by the middle of the fifteenth century, not only overshadowed that of the throne, but threatened to subvert the liberties of the state.

Their self-confidence, however, proved eventually their ruin. They disdained a co-operation with the lower orders in defence of their privileges. This work will review the dexterous policy by which the crown contrived to strip the aristocracy of its substantial privileges, and prepared the way for the period when it should retain possession only of a few barren though ostentatious dignities.

The inferior orders of nobility, the *hidalgos* (whose dignity, like that of the *ricos hombres*, would seem, as their name imports, to have been originally founded on wealth), and the *cavalleros*, or knights, enjoyed many of the immunities of the higher class, especially that of exemption from taxation. Knighthood appears to have been regarded with especial favour by the law of Castile. The apotheosis of chivalry, in the person of their apostle and patron, St James, contributed still further to this exaltation of sentiment which was maintained by the various military orders, who devoted themselves, in the bold language of the age, to the service 'of God and the ladies'. The Spaniard may be said to have put in action what, in other countries, passed for the extravagancies of the minstrel.

The influence of the ecclesiastics in Spain may be traced back to the age of the Visigoths, when they controlled the affairs of the state in the great national councils of Toledo. But, while the native ecclesiastics obtained complete ascendency over the popular mind, the Roman See could boast of less influence in Spain than in any other country in Europe.

Open concubinage was familiarly practised by the clergy, as well as laity, of the period; and, so far from being reprobated by the law of the land, seems anciently to have been countenanced by it. This moral insensibility may probably be referred to the contagious example of their Mahometan neighbours; but, from whatever source derived, the practice was indulged to such a shameless extent, that, as the nation advanced in refinement, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it became the subject of frequent legislative enactments, in which the concubines of the clergy are described as causing general scandal by their lawless effrontery and ostentatious magnificence of apparel.

Notwithstanding this prevalent licentiousness of the Spanish ecclesiastics, their influence became every day more widely extended, while this ascendency, for which they were particularly indebted in that rude age to their superior learning and capacity, was perpetuated by their enormous acquisitions of wealth. Scarcely a town was reconquered from the Moors, without a considerable portion of its territory being appropriated to the support of some ancient, or the foundation of some new, religious establishment. These were the common reservoir, into which flowed the copious streams of private as well as royal bounty; and, when the consequences of these alienations in mortmain came to be visible in the impoverishment of the public revenue, every attempt at legislative interference was in a great measure defeated by the piety or superstition of the age.

The ancient Spaniards, notwithstanding their prevalent superstition, were untinctured with the fiercer religious bigotry of later times; and the uncharitable temper of their priests, occasionally disclosed in the heats of religious war, was controlled by public opinion, which accorded a high degree of respect to the intellectual, as well as political superiority of the Arabs. But the time was now coming when these ancient barriers were to be broken down; when a difference of religious sentiment was to dissolve all the ties of human brotherhood; when uniformity of faith was to be purchased by the sacrifice of any rights, even those of intellectual freedom; when, in fine, the Christian and the Mussulman, the oppressor and the oppressed, were to be alike bowed down under the strong arm of ecclesiastical tyranny.

From the preceding survey of the constitutional privileges enjoyed by the different orders of the Castilian monarchy, previous to the fifteenth century, it is evident that the royal authority must have been circumscribed within very narrow limits. The election to the crown, although no longer vested in the hands of the national assembly, as with the Visigoths, was yet subject to its approbation. We have seen, in our review of the popular branch of the government, how closely its authority pressed even on the executive functions of the administration. The monarch was still further controlled, in this department, by his Royal or Privy Council, consisting of the chief nobility and great officers of state, to which, in later times, a deputation of the commons was sometimes added. His legislative powers were to be exercised in concurrence with the cortes; and, in the judicial department, his authority, during the latter part of the period under review, seems to have been chiefly exercised in the selection of officers for the higher judicatures, from a list of candidates presented to him on a vacancy by their members concurrently with his privy council.

The scantiness of the king's revenue corresponded with that of his constitutional authority. By an ancient law, the sovereign was entitled to a fifth of the spoils of victory. This, in the course of the long wars with the Moslems, would have secured him more ample possessions than were enjoyed by any prince in Christendom. But several circumstances concurred to prevent it.

The long minorities, with which Castile was afflicted perhaps more than any country in Europe, frequently threw the government into the hands of the principal nobility, who perverted to their own emoluments the high powers intrusted to them. They usurped the possessions of the crown, and invaded some of its most valuable privileges, so that the sovereign's subsequent life was often consumed in fruitless attempts to repair the losses of his minority.

Another circumstance, which contributed to impoverish the exchequer, was the occasional political revolutions in Castile, in which the adhesion of a faction was to be purchased only by the most ample concessions of the crown.

But perhaps a more operative cause, than all these, of the alleged evil, was the conduct of those imbecile princes, who, with heedless prodigality, squandered the public resources on their own personal pleasures and unworthy minions.

From the view which has been presented of the Castilian constitution at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it is apparent that the sovereign was possessed of less power, and the people of greater, than in other European monarchies at that period.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of the powers conceded to the nobility and the commons, there were important defects which prevented them from resting on any sound and permanent basis. The representation of the people in cortes, instead of partially emanating, as in England, from an independent body of landed proprietors, constituting the real strength of the nation, proceeded exclusively from the cities, whose elections were much more open to popular caprice and ministerial corruption, and whose numerous local jealousies prevented them from acting in cordial co-operation. The nobles, notwithstanding their occasional coalitions, were often arrayed in feuds against each other. Hence it became obvious that the monarch, who, notwithstanding his limited prerogative, assumed the anomalous privilege of transacting public business with the advice of only one branch of the legislature, and of occasionally dispensing altogether with with the attendance of the other, might, by throwing his own influence into the scale, give the preponderance to whichever party he should prefer; and, by thus dexterously availing himself of their opposite forces, erect his own authority on the ruins of the weaker.

INTRODUCTION: SECTION II

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ARAGON TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

THE political institutions of Aragon, although bearing a general resemblance to those of Castile, were sufficiently dissimilar to stamp a peculiar physiognomy on the character of the nation, which still continued after it had been incorporated with the great mass of the Spanish monarchy. It was not until the expiration of nearly five centuries after the Saracen invasion that the little district of Aragon, growing up under the shelter of the Pyrenees, was expanded into the dimensions of the province which now bears that name. During this period it was painfully struggling into being, like the other states of the Peninsula, by dint of fierce, unintermitted warfare with the infidel.

Even after this period, it would probably have filled but an insignificant space in the map of history and, instead of assuming an independent station, have been compelled, like Navarre, to accommodate itself to the politics of the potent monarchies by which it was surrounded, had it not extended its empire by a fortunate union with Catalonia in the twelfth, and the conquest of Valencia in the thirteenth century. These new territories were not only far more productive than its own, but, by their long line of coast and commodious ports, enabled the Aragonese, hitherto pent up within their barren mountains, to open a communication with distant regions.

Among these maritime republics, those of Catalonia were eminently conspicuous. By the incorporation of this country with the kingdom of Aragon, therefore, the strength of the latter was greatly augmented. The Aragonese princes paid particular attention to the navy. With its aid, the Aragonese monarchs achieved the conquest successively of Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles, and annexed them to the empire.

But, while the princes of Aragon were thus enlarging the bounds of their dominion abroad, there was probably not a sovereign in Europe possessed of such limited authority at home. The three great states with their dependencies, which constituted the Aragonese monarchy, had been declared by a statute of James the Second, in 1319, inalienable and indivisible. Each of them, however, maintained a separate constitution of government, and was administered by distinct laws. We confine ourselves to those of Aragon, which exhibit a more perfect model than those either of Catalonia or Valencia.

The national historians refer the origin of their government to a written constitution of about the middle of the ninth century, fragments of which are still preserved in certain ancient documents and chronicles. On occurrence of a vacancy in the throne, at this epoch, a monarch was elected by the twelve principal nobles, who prescribed a code of laws, to the observance of which he was obliged to swear before assuming the sceptre.

The great barons of Aragon were few in number. They affected to derive their descent from the twelve peers above mentioned, and were styled *ricos hombres de natura*, implying by this epithet, that they were not indebted for their creation to the will of the sovereign.

The privileges, both honorary and substantial, enjoyed by the *ricos hombres*, were very considerable. They filled the highest posts in the state. They originally appointed judges in their domains for the cognizance of certain civil causes, and over a class of their vassals exercised an unlimited criminal jurisdiction. They were excused from taxation except in specified cases, were exempted from all corporal and capital punishment; nor could they be imprisoned, although their estates might be sequestrated, for debt. A lower class of nobility styled *infanzones*, equivalent to the Castilian *hidalgos*, together with the *caballeros*, or knights, were also possessed of important though inferior immunities.

The king distributed among the great barons the territory reconquered from the Moors, in proportions determined by the amount of their respective services. Their incomes, in general, were very inferior to those of the great Castilian lords.

The laws conceded certain powers to the aristocracy of a most dangerous character. They were entitled, like the nobles of the sister kingdom, to defy and publicly renounce their allegiance to their sovereign, with the whimsical privilege, in addition, of commending their families and estates to his protection, which he was obliged to accord, until they were again reconciled. The mischievous right of private war was repeatedly recognized by statute.

The Aragonese sovereigns, who were many of them possessed of singular capacity and vigour, made repeated efforts to reduce the authority of their nobles within more temperate limits. Ferdinand the Catholic well discriminated the relative position of the Aragonese and Castilian nobility by saying, 'it was as difficult to divide the one, as to unite the other'.

Combinations became still more frequent after formally receiving the approbation of King Alfonso the Third, who, in 1287, signed the two celebrated ordinances entitled the 'Privileges of Union', by which his subjects were authorized to resort to arms on an infringement of their liberties. While these privileges continued in force, the nation was delivered over to the most frightful anarchy.

At length Peter the Fourth, a despot in heart, and naturally enough impatient of this eclipse of regal prerogative, brought the matter to an issue by defeating the army of the Union at the memorable battle of Epila, in 1348, 'the last,' says Zurita, 'in which it was permitted to the subject to take up arms against the sovereign for the cause of liberty'. Then, convoking an assembly of the states at Saragossa, he produced before them the instrument containing the two Privileges, and cut it in pieces with his dagger. In doing this, having wounded himself in the hand, he suffered the blood to trickle upon the parchment, exclaiming, that 'a law, which had been the occasion of so much blood, should be blotted out by the blood of a king'.

Instead of abusing his victory, as might have been anticipated from his character, Peter adopted a far more magnanimous policy. He confirmed the ancient privileges of the realm, and made in addition other wise and salutary concessions. From this period, therefore, is to be dated the possession of constitutional liberty in Aragon. From this period, too, the cortes, whose voice was scarcely heard amid the wild uproar of preceding times, was allowed to extend a beneficial and protecting sway over the land.

The Aragonese cortes was composed of four branches, or arms—the ricos hombres, or great barons; the lesser nobles, comprehending the knights; the clergy, and the commons. The nobility of every denomination were entitled to a seat in the legislature. The ricos hombres were allowed to appear by proxy, and a similar privilege was enjoyed by baronial heiresses. The number of this body was very limited, twelve of them constituting a quorum.

The arms of ecclesiastics embraced an ample delegation from the inferior as well as higher clergy. It is affirmed not to have been a component of the national legislature until more than a century and a half after the admission of the commons. Indeed the influence of the church was much less sensible in Aragon than in the other kingdoms of the Peninsula.

The commons enjoyed higher consideration and civil privileges than in Castile. For this they were perhaps somewhat indebted to the example of their Catalan neighbours, the influence of whose democratic institutions naturally extended to other parts of the Aragonese monarchy.

The cortes exercised the highest functions whether of a deliberative, legislative, or judicial nature. It had a right to be consulted on all matters of importance, especially on those of peace and war. No law was valid, no tax could be imposed, without its consent; and it carefully provided for the application of the revenue to its destined uses. It determined the succession to the crown; removed obnoxious ministers; reformed the household, and domestic expenditure, of the monarch; and exercised the power, in the most unreserved manner, of withholding supplies, as well as of resisting what it regarded as an encroachment on the liberties of the nation.

The statute-book affords the most unequivocal evidence of the fidelity with which the guardians of the realm discharged the high trust reposed in them, in the numerous enactments it exhibits, for the security both of person and property. Almost the first page which meets the eye in this venerable record contains the General Privilege, the Magna Charta, as it has been well denominated, of Aragon. It was granted by Peter the Great to the cortes at Saragossa, in 1283. It embraces a variety of provisions for the fair and open administration of justice; for ascertaining the legitimate powers intrusted to the cortes; for the security of property against exactions of the crown; and for the conservation of their legal immunities to the municipal corporations and the different orders of nobility. The Aragonese, who rightly regarded the General Privilege as the broadest basis of their liberties, repeatedly procured its confirmation by succeeding sovereigns.

The Aragonese cortes maintained a steady control over the operations of government, especially after the dissolution of the Union; and the weight of the commons was more decisive in it than in other similar assemblies of that period. Its singular distribution into four estates was favourable to this. The knights and *hidalgos*, an intermediate order between the great nobility and the people, when detached from the former, naturally lent additional support to the latter, with whom, indeed, they had considerable affinity. The representatives of certain cities, as well as a certain class of citizens, were entitled to a seat in this body, so that it approached both in spirit and substance to something like a popular representation. Indeed, this arm of the cortes was so uniformly vigilant in resisting any encroachment on the part of the crown that it has been said to represent, more than any other, the liberties of the nation. In some other particulars the Aragonese commons possessed an advantage over those of Castile. 1. By postponing their money grants to the conclusion of the session, and regulating them in some degree by the previous dispositions of the crown, they availed themselves of an important lever relinquished by the Castilian cortes. 2. The kingdom of Aragon proper was circumscribed within too narrow limits to allow of such local jealousies and estrangements, growing out of an apparent diversity of interests, as existed in the neighbouring monarchy. Their representatives, therefore, were enabled to move with a more hearty concert, and on a more consistent line of policy. 3. Lastly, the acknowledged right to a seat in cortes, possessed by every city which had once been represented there, must have gone far to preserve the popular branch from the melancholy state of dilapidation to which it was reduced in Castile by the arts of despotic princes.

No part of the constitution of Aragon has excited more interest, or more deservedly, than the office of the *Justicia*, or Justice, whose extraordinary functions were far from being limited to judicial matters, although in these his authority was supreme.

His most important duties may be briefly enumerated. He was authorized to pronounce on the validity of all royal letters and ordinances. He possessed, as has been said, concurrent jurisdiction with the cortes over all suits against the crown and its officers. Inferior judges were bound to consult him in all doubtful cases, and to abide by his opinion, as of 'equal authority', in the words of an ancient jurist, 'with the law itself'. An appeal lay to his tribunal from those of the territorial and royal judges.

In addition to these official functions, the Justice of Aragon was constituted a permanent counsellor of the sovereign, and, as such, was required to accompany him wherever he might reside. He was to advise the king on all constitutional questions of a doubtful complexion; and finally, on a new accession to the throne, it was his province to administer the coronation oath. This he performed with his head covered, and sitting, while the monarch, kneeling before him bare-headed, solemnly promised to maintain the liberties of the kingdom.

It was the avowed purpose of the institution of the Justicia to interpose such an authority between the crown and the people as might suffice for the entire protection of the latter. The Justice should continue in office during life, removable only, on sufficient cause, by the king and the cortes united.

Several provisions were enacted in order to secure the nation more effectually against the abuse of the high trust reposed in this officer. He was to be taken from the equestrian order, which, as intermediate between the high nobility and the people, was less likely to be influenced by undue partiality to either. He could not be selected from the ricos hombres, since this class was exempted from corporal punishment, while the Justice was made responsible to the cortes for the faithful discharge of his duties, under penalty of death.

The governments of Valencia and Catalonia, which, as has been already remarked, were administered independently of each other after their consolidation into one monarchy, bore a very near resemblance to that of Aragon. No institution, however, corresponding in its functions with that of the Justicia, seems to have obtained in either. Valencia, which had derived a large portion of its primitive population, after the conquest, from Aragon, preserved the most intimate relations with the parent kingdom, and was constantly at its side during the tempestuous season of the Union. The Catalans were peculiarly jealous of their exclusive privileges, and their civil institutions wore a more democratic aspect than those of any other of the confederated states, circumstances which led to important results that fall within the compass of our narrative.

The city of Barcelona, which originally gave its name to the county of which it was the capital, was distinguished from a very early period by ample municipal privileges. The wealth which flowed in as the result of her activity and enterprise was evinced by her numerous public works, her docks, arsenal, warehouses, exchange, hospitals, and other constructions of general utility. Strangers who visited Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries expatiate on the magnificence of this city, its commodious private edifices, the cleanliness of its streets and public squares (a virtue by no means usual in that day), and on the amenity of its gardens and cultivated environs.

But the peculiar glory of Barcelona was the freedom of her municipal institutions. Her government consisted of a senate or council of one hundred, and a body of *regidores* or counsellors, as they were styled, varying at times from four to six in number, the former intrusted with the legislative, the latter with the executive functions of administration. A large proportion of these bodies were selected from the merchants, tradesmen, and mechanics of the city. They were invested not merely with municipal authority, but with many of the rights of sovereignty. They entered into commercial treaties with foreign powers; superintended the defence of the city in time of war; provided for the security of trade; granted letters of reprisal against any nation who might violate it; and raised and appropriated the public moneys for the construction of useful works, or the encouragement of such commercial adventures as were too hazardous or expensive for individual enterprise.

The counsellors, who presided over the municipality, were complimented with certain honorary privileges not even accorded to the nobility.

The burghers of Barcelona, and indeed of Catalonia in general, which enjoyed more or less of a similar freedom, assumed a haughty independence of character beyond what existed among the same class in other parts of Spain. This, combined with the martial daring fostered by a life of maritime adventure and warfare, made them impatient, not merely of oppression but of contradiction, on the part of their sovereigns, who have experienced more frequent and more sturdy resistance from this quarter of their dominions, than from every other. Navagiero, the Venetian ambassador to Spain, early in the sixteenth century, although a republican himself, was so struck with what he deemed the insubordination of the Barcelonians, that he asserts, 'The inhabitants have so many privileges, that the king scarcely retains any authority over them; their liberty,' he adds, 'should rather go by the name of license'.

The Aragonese monarchs well understood the value of their Catalan dominions, which sustained a proportion of the public burdens equal in amount to that of both the other states of the kingdom. Notwithstanding the mortifications which they occasionally experienced from this quarter, they uniformly extended towards it the most liberal protection.

Catalonia may divide with Provence the glory of being the region where the voice of song was first awakened in modern Europe. During the first half of the fifteenth century, long after the genuine race of the troubadours had passed away, the Provençal or Limousin verse was carried to its highest excellence by the poets of Valencia. But their language has long since ceased to be the language of literature. On the union of the two crowns of Castile and Aragon, the dialect of the former became that of the court and of the Muses. The beautiful Provençal, once more rich and melodious than any other idiom in the Peninsula, was abandoned as a *patois* to the lower orders of the Catalans, who, with the language, may boast that they also have inherited the noble principles of freedom which distinguished their ancestors.

CHAPTER I

STATE OF CASTILE AT THE BIRTH OF ISABELLA—REIGN OF JOHN II OF CASTILE

1406–1454

THE fierce civil feuds which preceded the accession of the House of Trastamara in 1368 were as fatal to the nobility of Castile as the wars of the Roses were to that of England. There was scarcely a family of note which had not poured out its blood on the field or the scaffold. The influence of the aristocracy was, of course, much diminished with its numbers. The long wars with foreign powers, which a disputed succession entailed on the country, were almost equally prejudicial to the authority of the monarch, who was willing to buoy up his tottering title by the most liberal concession of privileges to the people. Thus the commons rose in proportion as the crown and the privileged orders descended in the scale. And, when the claims of the several competitors for the throne were finally extinguished and the tranquillity of the kingdom was secured by the union of Henry the Third with Catharine of Lancaster at the close of the fourteenth century, the third estate may be said to have attained to the highest degree of political consequence which it ever reached in Castile.

The healthful action of the body politic, during the long interval of peace that followed this auspicious union, enabled it to repair the strength which had been wasted in its murderous civil contests. The ancient channels of commerce were again opened; various new manufactures were introduced, and carried to a considerable perfection; wealth, with its usual concomitants, elegance and comfort, flowed in apace; and the nation promised itself a long career of prosperity under a monarch who respected the laws in his own person, and administered them with vigour. All these fair hopes were blasted by the premature death of Henry the Third, before he had reached his twenty-eighth year. The crown devolved on his son John the Second, then a minor, whose reign was one of the longest and the most disastrous in the Castilian annals. It, however, gave birth to Isabella, the illustrious subject of our narrative.

The wise administration of the regency, during a long minority, postponed the season of calamity; and, when it at length arrived, it was concealed for some time from the eyes of the vulgar by the pomp and brilliant festivities which distinguished the court of the young monarch. His indisposition, if not incapacity for business, however, gradually became manifest; and, while he resigned himself without reserve to pleasures, which it must be confessed were not unfrequently of a refined and intellectual character, he abandoned the government of his kingdom to the control of favourites.

The most conspicuous of these was Alvaro de Luna, grand master of St James, and constable of Castile. The king, it was said, only signed, while the constable dictated and executed.

John's blind partiality for his favourite is the key to all the troubles which agitated the kingdom during the last thirty years of his reign. This melancholy infatuation of the king is imputed by the writers of that age to sorcery on the part of the favourite. But the only witchcraft which he used was the ascendency of a strong mind over a weak one.

During this long-protracted anarchy, the people lost whatever they had gained in the two preceding reigns. By the advice of his minister, the king not only abandoned the constitutional policy of his predecessors in regard to the commons, but entered on the most arbitrary and systematic violation of their rights. Their deputies were excluded from the privy council, or lost all influence in it. Attempts were made to impose taxes without the legislative sanction. The municipal territories were alienated, and lavished on the royal minions. The freedom of elections was invaded, and delegates to cortes were frequently nominated by the crown; and, to complete the iniquitous scheme of oppression, *pragmáticas*, or royal proclamations, were issued, containing provisions repugnant to the acknowledged law of the land, and affirming in the most unqualified terms the right of the sovereign to legislate for his subjects.

A scheme was devised for bringing the popular branch of the legislature more effectually within the control of the crown, by diminishing the number of its constituents. It has been already remarked that a great irregularity prevailed in Castile as to the number of cities which, at different times, exercised the right of representation. During the fourteenth century, the deputation from this order had been uncommonly full. The king, however, availing himself of this indeterminateness, caused writs to be issued to a very small proportion of the towns which had usually enjoyed the privilege. In this manner the Castilian cortes, which, notwithstanding its occasional fluctuations, had exhibited during the preceding century what might be regarded as a representation of the whole commonwealth, was gradually reduced, during the reigns of John the Second and his son Henry the Fourth, to the deputations of some seventeen or eighteen cities.

The non-represented were required to transmit their instructions to the deputies of the privileged cities. Thus Salamanca appeared in behalf of five hundred towns and fourteen hundred villages; and the populous province of Galicia was represented by the little town of Zamora, which is not even included within its geographical limits. But, although the cortes, thus reduced in numbers, necessarily lost much of its weight, it still maintained a bold front against the usurpations of the crown. It does not appear, indeed, that any attempt was made under John the Second, or his successor, to corrupt its members, or to control the freedom of debate, although such a proceeding is not improbable, as altogether conformable to their ordinary policy, and as the natural result of their preliminary measures. But, however true the deputies continued to themselves and to those who sent them, it is evident that so limited and partial a selection no longer afforded a representation of the interests of the whole country. Thus early was the fair dawn of freedom overcast which opened in Castile under more brilliant auspices, perhaps, than in any other country in Europe.

While the reign of John the Second is so deservedly odious in a political view, in a literary it may be inscribed with what Giovio calls 'the golden pen of history'. It was an epoch in the Castilian, corresponding with that of the reign of Francis the First in French literature, distinguished not so much by any production of extraordinary genius, as by the effort made for the introduction of an elegant culture.

The profession of letters itself was held in little repute by the higher orders of the nation, who were altogether untinctured with liberal learning. While the nobles of the sister kingdom of Aragon, assembled in their poetic courts, in imitation of their Provençal neighbours, vied with each other in lays of love and chivalry, those of Castile disdained these effeminate pleasures as unworthy of the profession of arms, the only one of any estimation in their eyes. The benignant influence of John was perceptible in softening this ferocious temper. He was himself sufficiently accomplished for a king. He was fond of books, wrote and spoke Latin with facility, composed verses, and condescended occasionally to correct those of his loving subjects. Whatever might be the value of his criticisms, that of his example cannot be doubted. The courtiers, with the quick scent for their own interest which distinguishes the tribe in every country, soon turned their attention to the same polite studies. And thus Castilian poetry received very early the courtly stamp which continued its prominent characteristic down to the age of its meridian glory.

Among the most eminent of these noble *savans* was Henry, marquis of Villena. His whole life was consecrated to letters, and especially to the study of natural science. He translated Dante's *Commedia* into prose, and is said to have given the first example of a version of the *Aeneid* into a modern language. He laboured assiduously to introduce a more cultivated taste among his countrymen, and his little treatise on the *gaya sciencia*, as the divine art was then called, is the first approximation, however faint, to an Art of Poetry in the Castilian tongue.

Another of the illustrious wits of this reign was Iñigo López de Mendoza, marquis of Santillana. Although passionately devoted to letters, he did not, like his friend the marquis of Villena, neglect his public or domestic duties for them. On the contrary, he discharged the most important civil and military functions. He made his house an academy in which the young cavaliers of the court might practise the martial exercises of the age; and he assembled round him at the same time men eminent for genius and science, whom he munificently recompensed, and encouraged by his example. His own taste led him to poetry, of which he has left some elaborate specimens. He possessed the soul of a poet; and when he abandons himself to his native *redondillas*, delivers his sentiments with a sweetness and grace inimitable. To him is to be ascribed the glory of having naturalized the Italian sonnet in Castile. This great man, who found so much leisure for the cultivation of letters amidst the busy strife of politics, closed his career at the age of sixty, in 1458.

But the most conspicuous, for his poetical talents, of the brilliant circle which graced the court of John the Second, was John de Mena, a native of fair Córdova. Although born in a middling condition of life, with humble prospects, he was early smitten with a love of letters. After passing through the usual course of discipline at Salamanca, he repaired to Rome, where in the study of those immortal masters whose writings had but recently revealed the full capacities of a modern idiom, he imbibed principles of taste which gave a direction to his own genius, and, in some degree, to that of his countrymen. On his return to Spain, his literary merit soon attracted general admiration, and introduced him to the patronage of the great, and above all to the friendship of the marquis of Santillana. He was admitted into the private circle of the monarch, who, as his gossiping physician informs us, 'used to have Mena's verses lying on his table, as constantly as his prayer-book'.

His great work was his 'Laberinto', the outlines of whose plan may faintly remind us of that portion of the *Divina Commedia*, where Dante resigns himself to the guidance of Beatrice. Notwithstanding the deformity of the general plan, the obsolete barbarisms of the phraseology, its quaintness and pedantry, notwithstanding the cantering dactylic measure in which it is composed, the work abounds in conceptions, nay in whole episodes, of such mingled energy and beauty, as indicate genius of the highest order.

This epoch, as before remarked, was not so much distinguished by uncommon displays of genius, as by its general intellectual movement, and the enthusiasm kindled for liberal studies. Thus we find the corporation of Seville granting a hundred *doblas* of gold as the guerdon of a poet, who had celebrated in some score of verses the glories of their native city, and appropriating the same sum as an annual premium for a similar performance.

The impulse given to Castilian poetry extended to other departments of elegant literature. Epistolary and historical composition were cultivated with considerable success. The latter, especially, might admit of advantageous comparison with that of any other country in Europe at the same period.

While a small portion of the higher orders of the nation was thus endeavouring to forget the public calamities in the tranquillizing pursuit of letters, and a much larger portion in the indulgence of pleasure, the popular aversion for the minister Luna had been gradually infusing itself into the royal bosom. His too obvious assumption of superiority, even over the monarch who had raised him from the dust, was probably the real though secret cause of this disgust. But the habitual ascendency of the favourite over his master prevented the latter from disclosing this feeling until it was heightened by an occurrence which sets in a strong light the imbecility of the one and the presumption of the other. John, on the death of his wife, María of Aragon, had formed the design of connecting himself with a daughter of the king of France. But the constable, in the meantime, without even the privity of his master, entered into negotiations for his marriage with the princess Isabella, granddaughter of John the First of Portugal. The monarch, with an unprecedented degree of complaisance, acquiesced in an arrangement professedly repugnant to his own inclinations.

The new queen, disgusted with his haughty bearing, and probably not much gratified with the subordinate situation to which he had reduced her husband, entered heartily into the feelings of the latter, and indeed contrived to extinguish whatever spark of latent affection for his ancient favourite lurked within his breast. John, yet fearing the overgrown power of the constable too much to encounter him openly, condescended to adopt the dastardly policy of Tiberius on a similar occasion, by caressing the man whom he designed to ruin; and he eventually obtained possession of his person, only by a violation of the royal safe-conduct. The constable's trial was referred to a commission of jurists and privy counsellors, who, after a summary and informal investigation, pronounced on him the sentence of death. His mutilated remains, after having been exposed for several days to the gaze of the populace, were removed by the brethren of a charitable order to a place called the hermitage of St Andrew, appropriated as the cemetery for malefactors. Such was the tragic end of Alvaro de Luna, a man, who, for more than thirty years, controlled the counsels of the sovereign, or, to speak more properly, was himself the sovereign of Castile.

So far from deriving a wholesome warning from experience, John confided the entire direction of his kingdom to individuals not less interested, but possessed of far less enlarged capacities, than the former minister. Penetrated with remorse at the retrospect of his unprofitable life, and filled with melancholy presages of the future, the unhappy prince lamented to his faithful attendant Cibdareal, on his death-bed, that 'he had not been born the son of a mechanic, instead of king of Castile'. He died July 21, 1454, after a reign of eight and forty years, if reign it may be called, which was more properly one protracted minority. John left one child by his first wife, Henry, who succeeded him on the throne; and by his second wife two others, Alfonso, then an infant, and Isabella, afterwards queen of Castile, the subject of the present narrative. She had scarcely reached her fourth year at the time of her father's decease, having been born on April 22, 1451, at Madrigal. The king recommended his younger children to the especial care and protection of their brother Henry, and assigned the town of Cuellar, with its territory and a considerable sum of money, for the maintenance of the Infanta Isabella.

CHAPTER II

CONDITION OF ARAGON DURING THE MINORITY OF FERDINAND—REIGN OF JOHN II OF ARAGON

1452–1472

WE now view the extraordinary circumstances which opened the way for Ferdinand's succession. The throne, which had become vacant by the death of Martín, in 1410, was awarded by the committee of judges to whom the nation had referred the great question of the succession, to Ferdinand, regent of Castile during the minority of his nephew, John the Second. Thus the sceptre, after having for more than two centuries descended in the family of Barcelona, was transferred to the same bastard branch of Trastamara that ruled over the Castilian monarchy. Ferdinand the First was succeeded after a brief reign by his son Alfonso the Fifth, whose personal history belongs less to Aragon than to Naples, which kingdom he acquired by his own prowess, and where he established his residence, attracted, no doubt, by the superior amenity of the climate and the higher intellectual culture, as well as the pliant temper of the people, far more grateful to the monarch than the sturdy independence of his own countrymen.

During his long absence, the government of his hereditary domains devolved on his brother John, as his lieutenant-general in Aragon. This prince had married Blanche, widow of Martín, king of Sicily, and daughter of Charles the Third, of Navarre. By her he had three children—Carlos, prince of Viana; Blanche, married to and afterwards repudiated by Henry the Fourth of Castile; and Eleanor, who espoused a French noble, Gaston, count of Foix.

In 1447, John of Aragon contracted a second alliance with Joan Henríquez, of the blood royal of Castile, and daughter of Don Frederic Henríquez, admiral of that kingdom, a woman considerably younger than himself, of consummate address, intrepid spirit, and unprincipled ambition. Some years after this union, John sent his wife into Navarre, with authority to divide with his son Carlos the administration of the government there.

Navarre was at that time divided by two potent factions, styled, from their ancient leaders, Beaumonts and Agramonts, whose hostility, originating in a personal feud, had continued long after its original cause had become extinct. The prince of Viana was intimately connected with some of the principal partisans of the Beaumont faction. The Agramonts, on the other hand, induced rather by hostility to their political adversaries than to the prince of Viana, vehemently espoused the cause of the queen. The queen, who had retired to Estella, was besieged there by the forces of the prince. The king, her husband, on receiving intelligence of this, instantly marched to her relief. Father and son confronted each other at the head of their respective armies near the town of Aybar.

The unnatural position in which they thus found themselves seems to have sobered their minds, and to have opened the way to an accommodation, the terms of which were actually arranged, when the long-smothered rancour of the ancient factions of Navarre thus brought in martial array against each other, refusing all control, precipitated them into an engagement. The royal forces were inferior in number, but superior in discipline, to those of the prince, who after a well-contested action, saw his own party entirely discomfited, and himself a prisoner.

Some months before this event, Queen Joan had been delivered of a son, afterwards so famous as Ferdinand the Catholic. This auspicious event occurred in the little town of Sos, in Aragon, on March 10, 1452.

The demonstrations of satisfaction, exhibited by John and his court on this occasion, contrasted strangely with the stern severity with which he continued to visit the offences of his elder offspring. The young prince, on his return to Navarre, became again involved in the factions which desolated that unhappy kingdom, and, after an ineffectual struggle against his enemies, resolved to seek an asylum at the court of his uncle Alfonso the Fifth of Naples, and to refer to him the final arbitration of his differences with his father.

These bright prospects were suddenly overcast by the death of Alfonso, who expired at Naples of a fever in the month of May, 1458.

The frank and courteous manners of Carlos had won so powerfully on the affections of Neapolitans, who distrusted the dark, ambiguous character of Ferdinand, Alfonso's heir, that a large party eagerly pressed the prince to assert his title to the vacant throne, assuring him of a general support from the people. But Carlos, from motives of prudence or magnanimity, declined engaging in this new contest, and passed over to Sicily, whence he resolved to solicit a final reconciliation with his father.

John, now king of Aragon and its dependencies, alarmed by the reports of his son's popularity in Sicily, became as solicitous for the security of his authority there, as he had before been for it in Navarre. He accordingly sought to soothe the mind of the prince by the fairest professions, and to allure him back to Spain by the prospect of an effectual reconciliation. Carlos proceeded to Igualada, where an interview took place between him and the king and queen, in which he conducted himself with unfeigned humility and penitence, reciprocated on their part by the most consummate dissimulation.

It was expected that John would hasten to acknowledge his son's title as heir apparent to the crown of Aragon, and convene an assembly of the states to tender him the customary oath of allegiance. But nothing was further from the monarch's intention.

In this unnatural procedure it was easy to discern the influence of the queen. In addition to her original causes of aversion to Carlos, she regarded him with hatred as the insuperable obstacle to her own child Ferdinand's advancement. Even the affection of John seemed to be now wholly transferred from the offspring of his first to that of his second marriage; and, as the queen's influence over him was unbounded, she found it easy by artful suggestions to put a dark construction on every action of Carlos, and to close up every avenue of returning affection within his bosom.

Convinced at length of the hopeless alienation of his father, the prince of Viana turned his attention to other quarters, whence he might obtain support, and eagerly entered into a negotiation, which had been opened with him on the part of Henry the Fourth of Castile, for a union with his sister the princess Isabella. This was coming in direct collision with the favourite scheme of his parents. The marriage of Isabella with the young Ferdinand, which indeed, from the parity of their ages, was a much more suitable connexion than that with Carlos, had long been the darling object of their policy, and they resolved to effect it in the face of every obstacle. In conformity with this purpose, John invited the prince of Viana to attend him at Lérida, where he was then holding the cortes of Catalonia. The latter fondly, and indeed foolishly, after his manifold experience to the contrary, confiding in the relenting disposition of his father, hastened to obey the summons, in expectation of being publicly acknowledged as his heir in the assembly of the states. After a brief interview he was arrested, and placed in strict confinement.

The whole kingdom was thrown into a ferment. The high-spirited Catalans rose in arms, almost to a man. The flame of insurrection spread throughout Aragon, Valencia, and Navarre, and was speedily communicated to Sardinia and Sicily. The king of Castile supported Carlos at the same time by an irruption into Navarre, and his partisans, the Beaumonts, co-operated with these movements by a descent on Aragon. John, alarmed at the tempest which his precipitate conduct had roused, at length saw the necessity of releasing his prisoner.

Fortune seemed now weary of persecution, and Carlos, happy in the attachment of a brave and powerful people, appeared at length to have reached a haven of permanent security. But at this crisis he fell ill of a fever, or, as some historians insinuate, of a disorder occasioned by poison administered during his imprisonment, a fact which, although unsupported by positive evidence, seems, notwithstanding its atrocity, to be no wise improbable, considering the character of the parties implicated. He expired on September 23, 1461, in the forty-first year of his age, bequeathing his title to the crown of Navarre, in conformity with the original marriage contract of his parents, to his sister Blanche and her posterity.

The tragedy did not terminate with the death of Carlos. His sister Blanche, notwithstanding the inoffensive gentleness of her demeanor, had long been involved, by her adhesion to her unfortunate brother, in a similar proscription with him. The succession to Navarre having now devolved on her, she became tenfold an object of jealousy both to her father, the present possessor of that kingdom, and to her sister Eleanor, countess of Foix, to whom the reversion of it had been promised by John, on his own decease.

Within a fortnight after the decease of Carlos, the customary oaths of allegiance, so pertinaciously withheld from that unfortunate prince, were tendered by the Aragonese deputation, at Calatayud, to his brother Ferdinand, then only ten years of age, as heir apparent of the monarchy; after which he was conducted by his mother into Catalonia, in order to receive the more doubtful homage of that province.

The revolutionary spirit of the Barcelonians, kept alive by the recollection of past injury, as well as by the apprehensions of future vengeance, should John succeed in re-establishing his authority over them, soon became so alarming that the queen, whose consummate address, however, had first accomplished the object of her visit, found it advisable to withdraw from the capital. She sought refuge, with her son and such few adherents as still remained faithful to them, in the fortified city of Gerona, about fifty miles north of Barcelona.

The Catalans were repulsed, after a desperate struggle, with great slaughter. The queen displayed the most intrepid spirit in the midst of these alarming scenes, unappalled by the sense of her own danger and that of her child. Such were the stormy and disastrous scenes in which the youthful Ferdinand commenced a career whose subsequent prosperity was destined to be checkered by scarcely a reverse of fortune.

In the meanwhile, John, having in vain attempted to penetrate through Catalonia to the relief of his wife, effected this by the co-operation of his French ally, Louis the Eleventh. Three treaties, of May 3, 21 and 23, 1462, stipulated that Louis should furnish his ally with seven hundred lances and a proportionate number of archers and artillery during the war with Barcelona, to be indemnified by the payment of two hundred gold crowns within one year after the reduction of that city, as security for which the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne were pledged by John, with the cession of their revenues to the French king, until such time as the original debt should be redeemed. In this transaction both monarchs manifested their usual policy, Louis believing that this temporary mortgage would become a permanent alienation, from John's inability to discharge it, while the latter anticipated, as the event showed, with more justice, that the aversion of the inhabitants to the dismemberment of their country from the Aragonese monarchy would baffle every attempt on the part of the French to occupy it permanently.

In pursuance of these arrangements, seven hundred French lances with a considerable body of archers and artillery crossed the mountains, and, rapidly advancing on Gerona, compelled the insurgent army to raise the siege, and to decamp with such precipitation as to leave their cannon in the hands of the royalists. The Catalans now threw aside the thin veil with which they had hitherto covered their proceedings. The authorities of the principality, established in Barcelona, publicly renounced their allegiance to King John and his son Ferdinand, and proclaimed them enemies of the *republic*.

The government then enforced levies of all such as were above the age of fourteen, and, distrusting the sufficiency of its own resources, offered the sovereignty of the principality to Henry the Fourth of Castile. The court of Aragon, however, had so successfully insinuated its influence into the council of this imbecile monarch, that he was not permitted to afford the Catalans any effectual support. As he abandoned their cause altogether before the expiration of the year, the crown was offered to Don Pedro, constable of Portugal, a descendant of the ancient house of Barcelona. In the meanwhile, the old king of Aragon, attended by his youthful son, had made himself master, with his characteristic activity, of considerable acquisitions in the revolted territory, successively reducing Lérida, Cervera, Amposta, Tortosa, and the most important places in the south of

Catalonia. At this juncture the Portuguese prince fell ill of a fever, of which he died on June 29, 1466. This event, which seemed likely to lead to a termination of the war, proved ultimately the cause of its protraction.

It appeared, however, to present a favourable opportunity to John for opening a negotiation with the insurgents. But, so resolute were they in maintaining their independence, that the council of Barcelona condemned two of the principal citizens, suspected of defection from the cause, to be publicly executed. It refused moreover to admit an envoy from the Aragonese cortes within the city, and caused the despatches, with which he was intrusted by that body, to be torn in pieces before his face.

The Catalans then proceeded to elect René le Bon, as he was styled, of Anjou, to the vacant throne. This titular sovereign of half a dozen empires, in which he did not actually possess a rood of land, was too far advanced in years to assume this perilous enterprise himself. He accordingly intrusted it to his son John, duke of Calabria and Lorraine, who, in his romantic expeditions in southern Italy, had acquired a reputation for courtesy and knightly prowess inferior to none other of his time. Crowds of adventurers flocked to the standard of a leader whose ample inheritance of pretensions had made him familiar with war from his earliest boyhood. He soon found himself at the head of eight thousand effective troops. Louis the Eleventh, although not directly aiding his enterprise with supplies of men or money, was willing so far to countenance it as to open a passage for him through the mountain fastnesses of Roussillon, then in his keeping, and thus enable him to descend with his whole army at once on the northern borders of Catalonia.

The king of Aragon could oppose no force capable of resisting this formidable army. His exchequer, always low, was completely exhausted by the extraordinary efforts which he had made in the late campaigns; and, as the king of France, either disgusted with the long protraction of the war, or from secret goodwill to the enterprise of his feudal subject, withheld from King John the stipulated subsidies, the latter monarch found himself unable, with every expedient of loan and exaction, to raise sufficient money to pay his troops, or to supply his magazines. In addition to this, he was now involved in a dispute with the count and countess of Foix, who, eager to anticipate the possession of Navarre, which had been guaranteed to them on their father's decease, threatened a similar rebellion, though on much less justifiable pretences, to that which he had just experienced from Don Carlos. To crown the whole of John's calamities, his eyesight, which had been impaired by exposure and protracted sufferings during the winter siege of Amposta, now failed him altogether.

In this extremity, his intrepid wife, putting herself at the head of such forces as she could collect, passed by water to the eastern shores of Catalonia, besieging Rosas in person, and checking the operations of the enemy by the capture of several inferior places; while Prince Ferdinand, effecting a junction with her before Gerona, compelled the duke of Lorraine to abandon the siege of that important city. Ferdinand's ardour, however, had nearly proved fatal to him; as, in an accidental encounter with a more numerous party of the enemy, his jaded horse would infallibly have betrayed him into their hands, had it not been for the devotion of his officers, several of whom, throwing themselves between him and his pursuers, enabled him to escape by the sacrifice of their own liberty.

These ineffectual struggles could not turn the tide of fortune. The duke of Lorraine succeeded in this and the two following campaigns in making himself master of all the rich district of Ampurdan, north-east of Barcelona. In the capital itself, his truly princely qualities and his popular address secured him the most unbounded influence. Such was the enthusiasm for his person that, when he rode abroad, the people thronged around him embracing his knees, the trappings of his steed, and even the animal himself, in their extravagance, while the ladies, it is said, pawned their rings, necklaces, and other ornaments of their attire, in order to defray the expenses of the war.

King John, in the meanwhile, was draining the cup of bitterness to the dregs. In the winter of 1468, his queen, Joan Henríquez, fell a victim to a painful disorder, which had been secretly corroding her constitution for a number of years. In many respects, she was the most remarkable woman of her time.

At this period, he was further embarrassed, as will appear in the ensuing chapter, by negotiations for Ferdinand's marriage, which was to deprive him, in a great measure, of his son's co-operation in the struggle with his subjects.

A physician in Lérida of the Hebrew race, which monopolized at that time almost all the medieval science in Spain, persuaded the king to submit to the then unusual operation of couching, and succeeded in restoring sight to one of his eyes. He compelled the physician to repeat his experiment, which, in the end, proved perfectly successful.

Heaven, too, as if taking compassion on his accumulated misfortunes, now removed the principal obstacle to his success by the death of the duke of Lorraine, who was summoned from the theatre of his short-lived triumphs on December 16, 1469. As the father of the deceased prince was too old, and his children too young, to give effectual aid to their cause, the Catalans might be now said to be again without a leader. They rejected the conciliatory advances made them anew by John.

At length, reduced to the last extremity, they consented to enter into negotiations, which were concluded by a treaty equally honourable to both parties. The king then proceeded to the hall of the great palace, and solemnly swore to respect the constitution and laws of Catalonia.

Thus ended this long, disastrous civil war, the fruit of parental injustice and oppression, which had nearly cost the king of Aragon the fairest portion of his dominions; which devoted to disquietude and disappointment more than ten years, and which opened the way to foreign wars that continued to hang like a dark cloud over the evening of his days. It was attended, however, with one important result, that of establishing Ferdinand's succession over the whole of the domains of his ancestors.

CHAPTER III

REIGN OF HENRY IV OF CASTILE—CIVIL WAR—MARRIAGE OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA

1454–1469

WHILE these stormy events were occurring in Aragon, the Infanta Isabella was passing her youth amidst scenes scarcely less tumultuous. At birth, her prospect of succeeding to the throne was even more remote than Ferdinand's.

The accession of her elder brother, Henry the Fourth, was welcomed with an enthusiasm proportioned to the disgust which had been excited by the long-protracted reign of his predecessor. Henry was distinguished by a benign temper and by a condescension, which might be called familiarity, in his intercourse with his inferiors, virtues peculiarly engaging in persons of his elevated station; and as vices which wear the gloss of youth are not only pardoned, but are oftentimes popular with the vulgar, the reckless extravagance in which he indulged himself was favourably contrasted with the severe parsimony of his father in his latter years, and gained him the surname of 'the Liberal'. His treasurer having remonstrated with him on the prodigality of his expenditure, he replied, 'Kings, instead of hoarding treasure like private persons, are bound to dispense it for the happiness of their subjects. We must give to our enemies to make them friends, and to our friends to keep them so'. He suited the action so well to the word, that, in a few years, there was scarcely a *maravedí* remaining in the royal coffers.

He proclaimed a crusade against the Moors, a measure always popular in Castile. In the early part of his reign, scarce a year elapsed without one or more incursions into the hostile territory, with armies of thirty or forty thousand men. The results did not correspond with the magnificence of the apparatus. These brilliant expeditions too often evaporated in a mere border foray, or in an empty gasconade under the walls of Granada. The people of the south, on whom the charges of the expeditions fell with peculiar heaviness, from their neighbourhood to the scene of operations, complained that 'the war was carried on against them, not against the infidel'. On one occasion an attempt was made to detain the king's person, and thus prevent him from disbanding his forces. So soon had the royal authority fallen into contempt!

The contempt, to which the king exposed himself by his public conduct, was still further heightened by his domestic. With even a greater indisposition to business than was manifested by his father, he possessed none of the cultivated tastes which were the redeeming qualities of the latter. Having been addicted from his earliest youth to debauchery, when he had lost the powers, he retained all the relish, for the brutish pleasures of a voluptuary. He had repudiated his wife, Blanche of Aragon, after a union of twelve years, on grounds sufficiently ridiculous and humiliating. In 1455, he espoused Joanna, a Portuguese princess, sister of Alfonso the Fifth, the reigning monarch. The light and lively manners of the young queen, which seemed to defy the formal etiquette of the Castilian court, gave occasion to the grossest suspicions. The tongue of scandal indicated Beltran de la Cueva, one of the handsomest cavaliers in the kingdom, and then newly risen in the royal graces, as the person to whom she most liberally dispensed her favours.

One of the maids of honour, whom she brought in her train, acquired an ascendency over Henry, which he did not attempt to disguise. The palace, after the exhibition of the most disgraceful scenes, became divided by the factions of the hostile fair ones. The public were still more scandalized by Henry's sacrilegious intrusion of another of his mistresses into the post of abbess of a convent in Toledo, after the expulsion of her predecessor, a lady of noble rank and irreproachable character.

The stream of corruption soon finds its way from the higher to the more humble walks of life. The middling classes, imitating their superiors, indulged in an excess of luxury equally demoralizing, and ruinous to their fortunes. The contagion of example infected even the higher ecclesiastics. We find the archbishop of St James hunted from his see by the indignant populace, in consequence of an outrage attempted on a youthful bride, as she was returning from church, after the performance of the nuptial ceremony. The rights of the people could be but little consulted, or cared for, in a court thus abandoned to unbounded license. Accordingly we find a repetition of most of the unconstitutional and oppressive acts which occurred under John the Second, of Castile—attempts at arbitrary taxation, interference in the freedom of elections, and in the right exercised by the cities of nominating the commanders of such contingents of troops as they might contribute to the public defence. Their territories were repeatedly alienated, and, as well as the immense sums raised by the sale of papal indulgences for the prosecution of the Moorish war, were lavished on the royal satellites.

But, perhaps, the most crying evil of this period was the shameless adulteration of the coin. Instead of five royal mints, which formerly existed, there were now one hundred and fifty in the hands of authorized individuals who debased the coin to such a deplorable extent that the most common articles of life were enhanced in value three, four, and even six fold. Those who owed debts eagerly anticipated the season of payment; and, as the creditors refused to accept it in the depreciated currency, it became a fruitful source of litigation and tumult, until the whole nation seemed on the verge of bankruptcy.

But no part of Henry's conduct gave such umbrage to his nobles as the facility with which he resigned himself to the control of favourites whom he advanced over the heads of the ancient aristocracy of the land. Among those especially disgusted by this proceeding were Juan Pacheco, marquis of Villena, and Alfonso Carillo, archbishop of Toledo. The former was of noble Portuguese extraction, and originally a page in the service of the constable Alvaro de Luna, by whom he had been introduced into the household of Prince Henry, during the lifetime of John the Second. His polished and plausible address soon acquired him a complete ascendency over the feeble mind of his master, who was guided by his pernicious counsels in his frequent dissensions with his father. His restless spirit was perpetually involving his country in all the disasters of civil war. He was created marquis of Villena, by John the Second; and his ample domains made him the most powerful vassal in the kingdom.

His uncle, the archbishop of Toledo, was of a sterner character. He was one of those turbulent prelates, not unfrequent in a rude age, who seem intended by nature for the camp rather than the church. He was fierce, haughty, intractable; and he was supported in the execution of his ambitious enterprises no less by his undaunted resolution, than by the extraordinary resources which he enjoyed as primate of Spain. He was capable of warm attachments, and of making great personal sacrifices for his friends, from whom, in return, he exacted the most implicit deference. As he was both easily offended and implacable in his resentments, he seems to have been almost equally formidable as a friend and as an enemy.

These early adherents of Henry, little satisfied with seeing their own consequence eclipsed by the rising glories of the newly-created favourites, began secretly to stir up cabals and confederacies among the nobles. Henry had been persuaded to take part in the internal dissensions which then agitated the kingdom of Aragon, and had supported the Catalans in their opposition to their sovereign by seasonable supplies of men and money. He had even made some considerable conquests for himself, when he was induced, by the advice of the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo, to refer the arbitration of his differences with the king of Aragon to Louis the Eleventh of France.

The conferences were conducted at Bayonne, and an interview was subsequently agreed on between the kings of France and Castile, to be held near that city, on the banks of the Bidassoa, which divides the dominions of the respective monarchs. The contrast exhibited by the two princes at this interview, in their style of dress and equipage, was striking. Louis, who was even worse attired than usual, according to Comines, wore a coat of coarse woollen cloth cut short, a fashion then deemed very unsuitable to persons of rank, with a doublet of fustian, and a weather-beaten hat, surmounted by a little leaden image of the Virgin. Henry was escorted by his Moorish guard gorgeously equipped, and the cavaliers of his train vied with each other in the sumptuous decorations of dress and equipage. The two nations appear to have been mutually disgusted with the contrast exhibited by their opposite affectations. And thus the seeds of a national aversion were implanted, which, under the influence of more important circumstances, ripened into open hostility.

The Castilians, in particular, complained that the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo had compromised the honour of the nation by allowing their sovereign to cross over to the French shore of the Bidassoa, and its interests by the cession of the conquered territory to Aragon. They loudly accused them of being pensioners of Louis, a fact which does not appear improbable, considering the usual policy of this prince, who maintained an espionage over the councils of most of his neighbours. Henry was so far convinced of the truth of these imputations that he dismissed the obnoxious ministers.

The disgraced nobles instantly set about the organization of one of those formidable confederacies which had so often shaken the monarchs of Castile upon their throne. Some of the members of this coalition were doubtless influenced exclusively by personal jealousies. Many others entered into it from disgust at the imbecile and arbitrary proceedings of the crown.

In 1462, the queen had been delivered of a daughter, who was named like herself Joanna, but who, from her reputed father, Beltran de la Cueva, was better known by the cognomen of Beltraneja. Henry, however, had required the usual oath of allegiance to be tendered to her as presumptive heir to the crown. The confederates, in the bill of grievances which they now presented to the monarch, required that he should deliver his brother Alfonso into their hands, to be publicly acknowledged as his successor. They enumerated the manifold abuses which pervaded every department of government, and they entered into a covenant not to re-enter the service of their sovereign or accept any favour from him until he had redressed their wrongs.

Henry, unmoved either by the entreaties or remonstrances of his adherents, resorted to negotiation. He consented to an interview with the confederates, in which he was induced, by the plausible arguments of the marquis of Villena, to comply with most of their demands. The result of this deliberation, however, proved so prejudicial to the royal authority that the feeble monarch was easily persuaded to disavow the proceedings of the commissioners, on the ground of their secret collusion with his enemies, and even to attempt the seizure of their persons. The confederates, disgusted with this breach of faith, and in pursuance, perhaps, of their original design, instantly decided on the execution of that bold measure which some writers denounce as a flagrant act of rebellion, and others vindicate as a just and constitutional proceeding.

In an open plain, not far from the city Ávila, they caused a scaffold to be erected, of sufficient elevation to be easily seen from the surrounding country. A chair of state was placed on it, and in this was seated an effigy of King Henry, clad in sable robes and adorned with all the insignia of royalty, a sword at its side, a sceptre in its hand, and a crown upon its head. A manifesto was then read, exhibiting in glowing colours the tyrannical conduct of the king, and the consequent determination to depose him, and vindicating the proceeding by several precedents drawn from the history of the monarchy. The archbishop of Toledo, then ascending the platform, tore the diadem from the head of the statue. The marquis of Villena removed the sceptre, the count of Placencia the sword, the grand master of Alcántara and the counts of Benavente and Paredes the rest of the regal insignia. The image, thus despoiled of its honours, was rolled in the dust, amid the mingled groans and clamours of the spectators. The young prince Alfonso, at that time only eleven years of age, was seated on the vacant throne, and the assembled grandees severally kissed his hand in token of their homage. Trumpets announced the completion of the ceremony, and the populace greeted with joyful acclamations the accession of their new sovereign.

A large, probably the larger part of the nation, however, disapproved of the tumultuous proceedings of the confederates. However much they contemned the person of the monarch, they were not prepared to see the royal authority thus openly degraded. They indulged, too, some compassion for a prince whose political vices, at least, were imputable to mental incapacity and to evil counsellors, rather than to any natural turpitude of heart.

Henry's temper led him to adopt a conciliatory policy, and to try what could be effected by negotiation, before resorting to arms. In the former, however, he was no match for the confederates, or rather the marquis of Villena, their representative on these occasions. This nobleman, who had so zealously co-operated with his party in conferring the title of king on Alfonso, had intended to reserve the authority to himself. He probably found more difficulty in controlling the operations of the jealous and aspiring aristocracy, with whom he was associated, than he had imagined; and he was willing to aid the opposite party in maintaining a sufficient degree of strength to form a counterpoise to that of the confederates, and thus, while he made his own services the more necessary to the latter, to provide a safe retreat for himself, in case of the shipwreck of their fortunes.

In conformity with this dubious policy, he had, soon after the occurrence at Ávila, opened a secret correspondence with his former master, and suggested to him the idea of terminating their differences by some amicable adjustment. In consequence of these intimations, Henry consented to enter into a negotiation with the confederates; and it was agreed that the forces on both sides should be disbanded, and that a suspension of hostilities for six months should take place, during which some definitive and permanent scheme of reconciliation might be devised. Henry, in compliance with this arrangement, instantly disbanded his levies; they retired overwhelmed with indignation at the conduct of their sovereign, who so readily relinquished the only means of redress that he possessed, and whom they now saw it would be unavailing to assist, since he was so ready to desert himself.

A proposition was made to Henry for detaching the powerful family of Pacheco from the interests of the confederates, by the marriage of his sister Isabella with the brother of the marquis of Villena, Don Pedro Girón, grand master of the order of Calatrava, a nobleman of aspiring views, and one of the most active partisans of his faction.

Isabella was then in her sixteenth year. On her father's death, she retired with her mother to the little town of Arévalo, where, in seclusion, and far from the voice of flattery and falsehood, she had been permitted to unfold the natural graces of mind and person which might have been blighted in the pestilent atmosphere of a court. Here, under the maternal eye, she was carefully instructed in those lessons of practical piety, and in the deep reverence for religion which distinguished her maturer years. On the birth of the princess Joanna, she was removed, together with her brother Alfonso, by Henry to the royal palace, in order more effectually to discourage the formation of any faction adverse to the interests of his supposed daughter. In this abode of pleasure, surrounded by all the seductions most dazzling to youth, she did not forget the early lessons that she had imbibed; and the blameless purity of her conduct shone with additional lustre amid the scenes of levity and licentiousness by which she was surrounded.

The near connexion of Isabella with the crown, as well as her personal character, invited the application of numerous suitors. Her hand was first solicited for that very Ferdinand who was destined to be her future husband, though not till after the intervention of many inauspicious circumstances. She was next betrothed to his elder brother, Carlos; and some years after his decease, when thirteen years of age, was promised by Henry to Alfonso of Portugal. Isabella was present with her brother at a personal interview with that monarch in 1464, but neither threats nor entreaties could induce her to accede to a union so unsuitable from the disparity of their years. With her characteristic discretion, even at this early age, she rested her refusal on the ground that 'the infantas of Castile could not be disposed of in marriage, without the consent of the nobles of the realm.'

When Isabella understood in what manner she was now to be sacrificed to the selfish policy of her brother, in the prosecution of which compulsory measures if necessary were to be employed, she was filled with grief and resentment.

No sooner had the grand master received the bull of dispensation from the pope than, resigning his dignities in his military order, her set about such sumptuous preparations for his wedding as were due to the rank of his intended bride. When these were completed, he began his journey from his residence at Almagro to Madrid, where the nuptial ceremony was to be performed. But he was attacked by an acute disorder while at Villarubia, a village not far from Ciudad Real, which terminated his life in four days.

The death of the grand master dissipated, at a blow, all the fine schemes of the marquis of Villena, as well as every hope of reconciliation between the parties. The passions, which had been only smothered, now burst forth into open hostility. The two armies met on the plains of Olmedo.

The battle was attended with no result, except that of inspiring appetites, which had tasted of blood, with a relish for more unlicensed carnage. The most frightful anarchy now prevailed throughout the kingdom, dismembered by factions, which the extreme youth of one monarch and imbecility of the other made it impossible to control. In vain did the papal legate, who had received a commission to that effect from his master, interpose his mediation, and even fulminate sentence of excommunication against the confederates.

Every city, almost every family, became now divided within itself. In Seville and in Córdova, the inhabitants of one street carried on open war against those in another. The churches, which were fortified, and occupied with bodies of armed men, were many of them sacked and burnt to the ground. In Toledo no less than four thousand dwellings were consumed in one general conflagration. The ancient family feuds, as those between the great houses of Guzmán and Ponce de León in Andalusia, being revived, carried new division into the cities. In the country, the nobles and gentry, issuing from their castles, captured the defenceless traveller, who was obliged to redeem his liberty by the payment of a heavier ransom than was exacted even by the Mahometans.

At this crisis, a circumstance occurred which gave a new face to affairs, and totally disconcerted the operations of the confederates. This was the loss of their young leader, Alfonso, who was found dead in his bed on July 5, 1468.

It is not easy to consider the reign of Alfonso in any other light than that of a usurpation, although some Spanish writers regard him as a rightful sovereign. It is evident that proceedings so irregular as those at Ávila could have no pretence to constitutional validity without a very general expression of approbation on the part of the nation.

The leaders of the confederates were thrown into consternation by an event which threatened to dissolve their league, and to leave them exposed to the resentment of an offended sovereign. In this conjuncture, they naturally turned their eyes on Isabella. On the death of her brother, she withdrew to a monastery at Ávila, where she was visited by the archbishop of Toledo, who, in behalf of the confederates, requested her to occupy the station lately filled by Alfonso, and allow herself to be proclaimed queen of Castile.

Isabella unhesitatingly refused the seductive proffer, and replied that, 'while her brother Henry lived, none other had a right to the crown; that the country had been divided long enough under the rule of two contending monarchs; and that the death of Alfonso might perhaps be interpreted into an indication from Heaven of its disapprobation of their cause.' She expressed herself desirous of establishing a reconciliation between the parties, and offered heartily to co-operate with her brother in the reformation of existing abuses.

A reconciliation was effected between the parties on the following conditions, namely, that a general amnesty should be granted by the king for all past offences; that the queen, whose dissolute conduct was admitted to be matter of notoriety, should be divorced from her husband, and sent back to Portugal; that Isabella should have the principality of the Asturias (the usual demesne of the heir apparent to the crown) settled on her, together with a specific provision suitable to her rank; that she should be immediately recognized heir to the crowns of Castile and León; that a cortes should be convoked within forty days for the purpose of bestowing a legal sanction on her title, as well as reforming the various abuses of government; and finally, that Isabella should not be constrained to marry in opposition to her own wishes, nor should she do so without the consent of her brother.

In pursuance of these arrangements, an interview took place between Henry and Isabella, each attended by a brilliant cortège of cavaliers and nobles, at Toros de Guisando, in New Castile. In due time the representatives of the nation, convened in cortes at Ocaña, unanimously concurred in their approbation of these preliminary proceedings, and thus Isabella was announced to the world as the lawful successor to the crowns of Castile and León.

The new and legitimate basis, on which the pretensions of Isabella to the throne now rested, drew the attention of neighbouring princes, who contended with each other for the honour of her hand. Among these suitors was a brother of Edward the Fourth of England, not improbably Richard, duke of Gloucester, since Clarence was then engaged in his intrigues with the earl of Warwick, which led a few months later to his marriage with the daughter of that nobleman. Another suitor was the duke of Guienne, the unfortunate brother of Louis the Eleventh, and at that time the presumptive heir of the French monarchy.

The person on whom Isabella turned the most favourable eye was her kinsman Ferdinand of Aragon. Ferdinand was then in the bloom of life, and distinguished for the comeliness of his person. In the busy scenes in which he had been engaged from his boyhood, he had displayed a chivalrous valour, combined with maturity of judgment far above his years. Indeed, he was decidedly superior to his rivals in personal merit and attractions. But, while private inclinations thus happily coincided with considerations of expedience for inclining her to prefer the Aragonese match, a scheme was devised in another quarter for the express purpose of defeating it.

A fraction of the royal party, with the family of Mendoza at their head, had retired in disgust with the convention of Toros de Guisando, and openly espoused the cause of the princess Joanna. Thus were sown the seeds of new dissensions, before the old ones were completely eradicated. With this disaffected party the marquis of Villena, who, since his reconciliation, had resumed his ancient ascendency over Henry, now associated himself. He endeavoured to revive the obsolete pretensions of Alfonso, king of Portugal; and, the more effectually to secure the co-operation of Henry, he connected with his scheme a proposition for marrying his daughter Joanna with the son and heir of the Portuguese monarch. Thus this unfortunate princess might be enabled to assume at once a station suitable to her birth, and at some future opportunity assert with success her claim to the Castilian crown.

In furtherance of his complicated intrigue, Alfonso was invited to renew his addresses to Isabella in a more public manner than he had hitherto done. The princess returned, as before, a decided though temperate refusal. Henry, or rather the marquis of Villena, piqued at this opposition to his wishes, resolved to intimidate her into compliance, and menaced her with imprisonment in the royal fortress at Madrid.

Isabella, indignant at the oppressive treatment which she experienced from her brother, as well as at his notorious infraction of almost every article in the treaty of Toros de Guisando, felt herself released from her corresponding engagements, and determined to conclude the negotiations relative to her marriage without any further deference to his opinion. Before taking any decisive step, however, she was desirous of obtaining the concurrence of the leading nobles of her party. This was effected without difficulty. Fortified by their approbation, Isabella dismissed the Aragonese envoy with a favourable answer to his master's suit.

Her reply was received with almost as much satisfaction by the old king of Aragon, John the Second, as by his son. This monarch, one of the shrewdest princes of his time, had always been deeply sensible of the importance of consolidating the scattered monarchies of Spain under one head. He had solicited the hand of Isabella for his son when she possessed only a contingent reversion of the crown. But, when her succession had been settled on a more secure basis, he lost no time in effecting this favourite object of his policy. With the consent of the states, he had transferred to his son the title of king of Sicily, and associated him with himself in the government at home, in order to give him greater consequence in the eyes of his mistress. He then despatched a confidential agent into Castile, with instructions to gain over to his interests all who exercised any influence on the mind of the princess, furnishing him for this purpose with *cartes blanches*, signed by himself and Ferdinand, which he was empowered to fill at his discretion.

Between parties thus favourably disposed, there was no unnecessary delay. The marriage articles were signed, and sworn to by Ferdinand at Cervera, on January 7th. He promised faithfully to respect the laws and usages of Castile; to fix his residence in that kingdom, and not to quit it without the consent of Isabella; to alienate no property belonging to the crown; to prefer no foreigners to municipal offces, and indeed to make no appointments of a civil or military nature without her consent and approbation; and to resign to her exclusively the right of nomination to ecclesiastical benefices. All ordinances of a public nature were to be subscribed equally by both. Ferdinand engaged, moreover, to prosecute the war against the Moors; to respect King Henry; to suffer every noble to remain unmolested in the possession of his dignities, and not to demand restitution of the domains formerly owned by his father in Castile. The treaty concluded with a specification of a magnificent dower to be settled on Isabella, far more ample than that usually assigned to the queens of Aragon.

While these affairs were in progress, Isabella's situation was becoming extremely critical. She had availed herself of the absence of her brother and the marquis of Villena in the south, whither they had gone for the purpose of suppressing the still lingering spark of insurrection, to transfer her residence from Ocaña to Madrigal, where, under the protection of her mother, she intended to abide the issue of the pending negotiations with Aragon. Far, however, from escaping the vigilant eye of the marquis of Villena by this movement, she laid herself more open to it. She found the bishop of Burgos, the nephew of the marquis, stationed at Madrigal, who now served as an effectual spy upon her actions. Her most confidential servants were corrupted, and conveyed intelligence of her proceedings to her enemy. Alarmed at the actual progress made in the negotiations for her marriage, the marquis was now convinced that he could only hope to defeat them by resorting to the coercive system, which he had before abandoned.

In this exigency, she contrived to convey a knowledge of her situation to Admiral Henríquez, and the archbishop of Toledo. The active prelate, on receiving the summons, collected a body of horse, and reinforced by the admiral's troops, advanced with such expedition to Madrigal that he succeeded in anticipating the arrival of the enemy. Isabella received her friends with unfeigned satisfaction; and, bidding adieu to her dismayed guardian, the bishop of Burgos, and his attendants, she was borne off by her little army in a sort of military triumph to the friendly city of Valladolid, where she was welcomed by the citizens with a general burst of enthusiasm.

In the meantime Gutierre de Cárdenas, one of the household of the princess, and Alfonso de Palencia, the faithful chronicler of these events, were despatched into Aragon in order to quicken Ferdinand's operations, during the auspicious interval afforded by the absence of Henry in Andalusia. The old king of Aragon was in the very heat of the war against the insurgent Catalans, headed by the victorious John of Anjou. As he could spare neither the funds nor the force necessary for covering his son's entrance into Castile, he referred the whole matter to Ferdinand and his council.

It was at length determined that the prince should undertake the journey, accompanied by half a dozen attendants only, in the disguise of merchants, by the direct route from Saragossa. Another party, in order to divert the attention of the Castilians, should proceed in a different direction, with all the ostentation of a public embassy from the king of Aragon to Henry the Fourth.

The party journeyed chiefly in the night; Ferdinand assumed the disguise of a servant, and, when they halted on the road, took care of the mules, and served his companions at table. On October 9th he reached Dueñas in the kingdom of León, where the Castilian nobles and cavaliers of his party eagerly thronged to render him the homage due to his rank.

Ferdinand's arrival diffused universal joy in the little court of Isabella at Valladolid. Her first step was to transmit a letter to her brother Henry, in which she informed him of the presence of the prince in his dominions, and of their intended marriage. Arrangements were then made for an interview between the royal pair, in which some courtly parasites would fain have persuaded their mistress to require some act of homage from Ferdinand, in token of the inferiority of the crown of Aragon to that of Castile, a proposition which she rejected with her usual discretion. Ferdinand, on the evening of October 15th, passed privately from Dueñas, accompanied only by four attendants, to the neighbouring city of Valladolid, where he was received by the archbishop of Toledo, and conducted to the apartment of his mistress.

Ferdinand was at this time in the eighteenth year of his age. His complexion was fair, though somewhat bronzed by constant exposure to the sun, his eye quick and cheerful, his forehead ample, and approaching to baldness. His muscular and well-proportioned frame was invigorated by the toils of war, and by the chivalrous exercises in which he delighted. He was one of the best horsemen in his court, and excelled in field sports of every kind. His voice was somewhat sharp, but he possessed a fluent eloquence. When he had a point to carry, his address was courteous and even insinuating. He secured his health by extreme temperance in his diet, and by such habits of activity that it was said he seemed to find repose in business.

Isabella was a year older than her lover. In stature she was somewhat above the middle size. Her complexion was fair, her hair of a bright chestnut colour, inclining to red; and her mild blue eye beamed with intelligence and sensibility. She was exceedingly beautiful, 'the handsomest lady,' says one of her household, 'whom I ever beheld, and the most gracious in her manners'. The portrait, still in the royal palace, is conspicuous for an open symmetry of features, indicative of the natural serenity of temper, and that beautiful harmony of intellectual and moral qualities which most distinguished her. She was dignified in her demeanour, and modest even to a degree of reserve. She spoke the Castilian language with more than usual elegance, and early imbibed a relish for letters, in which she was superior to Ferdinand, whose education in this particular seems to have been neglected.

The interview lasted more than two hours, when Ferdinand retired to his quarters at Dueñas, as privately as he came. The preliminaries of the marriage, however, were first adjusted; but so great was the poverty of the parties that it was found necessary to borrow money to defray the expenses of the ceremony.

The marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella was publicly celebrated on the morning of October 19th, in the palace of John de Vivero, the temporary residence of the princess. A papal bull of dispensation was produced by the archbishop, relieving the parties from the impediment incurred by their falling within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. This spurious document was afterwards discovered to have been devised by the old king of Aragon, Ferdinand, and the archbishop, who were deterrred from applying to the court of Rome by the zeal with which it openly espoused the interests of Henry, and who knew that Isabella would never consent to a union repugnant to the canons of the established church, and one which involved such heavy ecclesiastical censures. A genuine bull of dispensation was obtained, some years later, from Sixtus the Fourth; but Isabella, whose honest mind abhorred every thing like artifice, was filled with no little uneasiness and mortification at the discovery of the imposition. The ensuing week was consumed in the usual festivities of this joyous season, at the expiration of which the new-married pair attended publicly the celebration of mass in the collegiate church of Santa María.

An embassy was despatched by Ferdinand and Isabella to Henry, to acquaint him with their proceedings, and again request his approbation of them. Henry coldly replied that 'he must advise with his ministers'.

CHAPTER IV

FACTIONS IN CASTILE—WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND ARAGON—DEATH OF HENRY IV OF CASTILE

1469-1474

THE marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella disconcerted the operations of the marquis of Villena, or as he should be styled, the grand master of St James, since he had resigned his marquisate to his elder son, on his appointment to the command of the military order. It was determined, however, in the councils of Henry to oppose at once the pretensions of the princess Joanna to those of Isabella; and an embassy was gladly received from the king of France, offering to the former lady the hand of his brother the duke of Guienne, the rejected suitor of Isabella. Louis the Eleventh was willing to engage his relative in the unsettled politics of a distant state, in order to relieve himself from his pretensions at home.

An interview took place between Henry the Fourth and the French ambassadors in October, 1470. Henry declared his sister to have forfeited whatever claims she had derived from the treaty of Toros de Guisando by marrying contrary to his approbation. He then with his queen swore to the legitimacy of the princess Joanna, and announced her as his true and lawful successor.

Many of the most considerable families in the kingdom, as the Pachecos, the Mendozas in all their extensive ramifications, the Zúñigas, the Velascos, the Pimentels, unmindful of the homage so recently rendered to Isabella, now openly testified their adhesion to her niece.

Ferdinand and his consort, who held their little court at Dueñas, were so poor as to be scarcely capable of defraying the ordinary charges of their table. The northern provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa and the populous province of Andalusia still maintained loyalty to Isabella unshaken. But her principal reliance was on the archbishop of Toledo. The prelate, however, with all his generous self-devotion, was far from being a comfortable ally. He would willingly have raised Isabella to the throne, but he would have her indebted for her elevation exclusively to himself. He looked with a jealous eye on her most intimate friends, and complained that neither she nor her husband deferred sufficiently to his counsel. The princess could not always conceal her disgust at these humours, and Ferdinand, on one occasion, plainly told him that 'he was not to be put in leading-strings, like so many of the sovereigns of Castile'.

The most frightful anarchy at this period prevailed throughout Castile. While the court was abandoned to corrupt or frivolous pleasure, the administration of justice was neglected. The nobles conducted their personal feuds with an array of numbers which might compete with those of powerful princes. The battles were of the most sanguinary and destructive kind. Andalusia was in particular the theatre of this savage warfare. The whole of that extensive district was divided by the factions of the Guzmáns and Ponces de León. One of these fiery cavaliers was Rodrigo Ponce de León, so deservedly celebrated afterwards in the wars of Granada as the marquis of Cádiz. On succeeding to his paternal honours, his haughty spirit, impatient of a rival, led him to revive the old feud with the duke of Medina Sidonia, the head of the Guzmáns, who, though the most powerful nobleman in Andalusia, was far his inferior in capacity and military science.

On one occasion the duke of Medina Sidonia mustered an army of twenty thousand men against his antagonist; on another, no less than fifteen hundred houses of the Ponce faction were burnt to the ground in Seville. The husbandman, stripped of his harvest and driven from his fields, abandoned himself to idleness, or sought subsistence by plunder. A scarcity ensued in the years 1472 and 1473, in which the prices of the most necessary commodities rose to an exorbitant height.

While Ferdinand's presence was more than ever necessary to support the drooping spirits of his party in Castile, he was unexpectedly summoned into Aragon to the assistance of his father. No sooner had Barcelona submitted to king John, as mentioned in a preceding chapter, than the inhabitants of Roussillon and Cerdagne, which provinces, it will be remem-gered, were placed in the custody of France, as a guaranty for the king of Aragon's engagements, oppressed by the grievous exactions of their new rulers, determined to break the yoke, and to put themselves again under the protection of their ancient master, provided they could obtain his support. The opportunity was favourable. Of all the country, Salces, Collioure, and the castle of Perpignan alone remained in the hands of the French. John then threw himself into the last-named city with a small body of forces, and instantly set about the construction of works to protect the inhabitants against the fire of the French garrison in the castle, as well as from the army which might soon be expected to besiege them from without.

Ferdinand, on receiving intelligence of his father's perilous situation, instantly resolved, by Isabella's advice, to march to his relief. This new army raised the siege at once.

The campaign was finally concluded by a treaty between the two monarchs, in which it was arranged that the king of Aragon should disburse within the year the sum originally stipulated for the services rendered him by Louis in his late war with his Catalan subjects; and that, in case of failure, the provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne should be permanently ceded to the French crown. The commanders of the fortified places in the contested territory, selected by one monarch from the nominations of the other, were excused during the interim from obedience to the mandates of either, at least so far as they might contravene their reciprocal engagements. There is little reason to believe that this singular compact was subscribed in good faith by either party.

During these occurrences Isabella's prospects were daily brightening in Castile. The duke of Guienne, the destined spouse of her rival Joanna, had died in France, but not until he had testified his contempt of his engagements with the Castilian princess by openly soliciting the hand of the heiress of Burgundy. Subsequent negotiations for her marriage with two other princes had entirely failed. The doubts which hung over her birth, and which the public protestations of Henry and his queen, far from dispelling, served only to augment, by the necessity which they implied for such an extraordinary proceeding, were sufficient to deter anyone from a connexion which must involve the party in all the disasters of a civil war.

Isabella's own character, moreover, contributed essentially to strengthen her cause. Her sedate conduct and the decorum maintained in her court formed a strong contrast with the frivolity and license which disgraced that of Henry and his consort. Thinking men were led to conclude that the sagacious administration of Isabella must eventually secure to her the ascendency over her rival.

Among the persons whose opinions experienced a decided revolution from these considerations, was Pedro González de Mendoza, archbishop of Seville and cardinal of Spain, a prelate, whose lofty station in the church was supported by talents of the highest order, and whose restless ambition led him, like many of the churchmen of the time, to take an active interest in politics, for which he was admirably adapted by his knowledge of affairs and discernment of character. Without deserting his former master, he privately entered into a correspondence with Isabella.

A circumstance occurred at this time which seemed to promise an accommodation between the adverse factions, or at least between Henry and his sister. The government of Segovia, whose impregnable citadel had been made the depository of the royal treasure, was intrusted to Andrés de Cabrera, an officer of the king's household. This cavalier influenced in part by personal pique to the grand master of St James, and still more perhaps by the importunities of his wife, Beatriz de Bobadilla, the early friend and companion of Isabella, entered into a correspondence with the princess, and sought to open the way for her permanent reconciliation with her brother. He accordingly invited her to Segovia, where Henry occasionally resided, and, to dispel any suspicions which she might entertain of his sincerity, despatched his wife secretly by night, disguised in the garb of a peasant, to Aranda, where Isabella then held her court. The latter, confirmed by the assurances of her friend, did not hesitate to comply with the invitation, and, accompanied by the archbishop of Toledo, proceeded to Segovia, where an interview took place between her and Henry the Fourth, in which she vindicated her past conduct, and endeavoured to obtain her brother's sanction to her union with Ferdinand. Henry, who was naturally of a placable temper, received her communication with complacency, and, in order to give public demonstration of the good understanding now subsisting between him and his sister, condescended to walk by her side, holding the bridle of her palfrey, as she rode along the streets of the city. Ferdinand, on his return into Castile, hastened to Segovia, where he was welcomed by the monarch with every appearance of satisfaction. A succession of fêtes and splendid entertainments, at which both parties assisted, seemed to announce an entire oblivion of all past animosities. The nation welcomed with satisfaction these symptoms of repose after the vexatious struggle by which it had been so long agitated.

The repose, however, was of no great duration. But, if the visit to Segovia failed in its destined purpose of a reconciliation with Henry, it was attended with the important consequence of securing to Isabella a faithful partisan in Cabrera, who, from the control which his situation gave him over the royal coffers, proved a most seasonable ally in her subsequent struggle with Joanna.

Not long after this event, Ferdinand received another summons from his father to attend him in Aragon, where the storm of war, which had been for some time gathering in the distance, now burst with pitiless fury. Ferdinand, after a brief interview with his father in Barcelona, proceeded to Saragossa, to solicit aid from the estates of Aragon.

The supplies furnished by the Aragonese cortes were inadequate to king John's necessities, and he was compelled, while hovering with his little force on the confines of Roussillon, to witness the gradual reduction of its capital, without being able to strike a blow in its defence. When at length an honourable capitulation was granted them on March 14, 1475, the garrison who evacuated the city, reduced to the number of four hundred, were obliged to march on foot to Barcelona, as they had consumed their horses during the siege. The occupation of Roussillon was followed by a truce of six months between the belligerent parties.

Reverting to the affairs of Castile, Henry the Fourth, pining under an incurable malady, was gradually approaching the termination of his disastrous reign. This event took place on the night of December 11, 1474. It was precipitated by the death of the grand master of St James, on whom the feeble mind of Henry had been long accustomed to rest for its support, and who was cut off by an acute disorder but a few months previous, in the full prime of his ambitious schemes. The king expired without a will, or even, as generally asserted, the designation of a successor.

With Henry the Fourth terminated the male line of the house of Trastamara, who had kept possession of the throne for more than a century, and in the course of only four generations had exhibited every gradation of character from the bold and chivalrous enterprise of the first Henry of that name down to the drivelling imbecility of the last. Never had the fortunes of the kingdom reached so low an ebb since the great Saracen invasion.

CHAPTER V

ACCESSION OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA— WAR OF THE SUCCESSION— BATTLE OF TORO

1474–1476

MOST of the contemporary writers are content to derive Isabella's title to the crown of Castile from the illegitimacy of her rival Joanna. But, as this fact, whatever probability it may receive from the avowed licentiousness of the queen and some other collateral circumstances, was never established by legal evidence, or even made the subject of legal inquiry, it cannot reasonably be adduced as affording in itself a satisfactory basis for the pretensions of Isabella.

These are to be derived from the will of the nation as expressed by its representatives in cortes. The power of this body to interpret the laws regulating the succession, and to determine the succession itself, in the most absolute manner, is incontrovertible, having been established by repeated precedents from a very ancient period. In the present instance, the legislature, soon after the birth of Joanna, rendered the usual oaths of allegiance to her as heir apparent to the monarchy. On a subsequent occasion, however, the cortes, for reasons deemed sufficient by itself, and under a conviction that its consent to the preceding measure had been obtained through an undue influence on the part of the crown, reversed its former acts, and did homage to Isabella as the only true and lawful successor. In this disposition the legislature continued so resolute that, notwithstanding Henry twice convoked the states for the express purpose of renewing their allegiance to Joanna, they refused to comply with the summons. Thus Isabella, at the time of her brother's death, possessed a title to the crown unimpaired, and derived from the sole authority which could give it a constitutional validity.

On learning Henry's death, Isabella signified to the inhabitants of Segovia, where she then resided, her desire of being proclaimed queen in that city. Accordingly, on December 13, 1474, a numerous assembly, consisting of the nobles, clergy, and public magistrates in their robes of office, waited on her at the alcázar or castle, and, receiving her under a canopy of rich brocade, escorted her in solemn procession to the principal square of the city, where a broad platform or scaffold had been erected for the performance of the ceremony. Isabella, after receiving the homage of her subjects, and swearing to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, descended from the platform and, attended by the same cortège, moved slowly towards the cathedral church, where, after Te Deum had been chanted, she prostrated herself before the principal altar, and, returning thanks to the Almighty for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her, implored him to enlighten her future counsels, so that she might discharge the high trust reposed in her, with equity and wisdom.

The cities favourable to Isabella's cause, comprehending far the most populous and wealthy throughout the kingdom, followed the example of Segovia and raised the royal standard for their new sovereign. The principal grandees, as well as most of the inferior nobility, soon presented themselves from all quarters, in order to tender the customary oaths of allegiance. An assembly of the estates, convened for the ensuing month of February at Segovia, imparted, by a similar ceremony, a constitutional sanction to these proceedings.

On Ferdinand's arrival from Aragon, where he was staying at the time of Henry's death, occupied with the war of Roussillon, a disagreeable discussion took place in regard to the respective authority to be enjoyed by the husband and wife in the administration of the government. The affair was finally referred to the arbitration of the cardinal of Spain and the archbishop of Toledo, who, after careful examination, established by undoubted precedent that the exclusion of females from the succession did not obtain in Castile and León, as was the case in Aragon; that Isabella was consequently sole heir of these dominions; and that whatever authority Ferdinand might possess, could only be derived through her. A settlement was then made on the basis of the original marriage contract. All municipal appointments and collation to ecclesiastical benefices were to be made in the name of both with the advice and consent of the queen. All fiscal nominations and issues from the treasury were to be subject to her order. The commanders of the fortified places were to render homage to her alone. Justice was to be administered by both conjointly, when residing in the same place, and by each independently, when separate. Proclamations and letters patent were to be subscribed with the signatures of both; their images were to be stamped on the public coin, and the united arms of Castile and Aragon emblazoned on a common seal.

Ferdinand, it is said, was so much dissatisfied with an arrangement which vested the essential rights of sovereignty in his consort that he threatened to return to Aragon; but Isabella reminded him that this distribution of power was rather nominal than real; that their interests were indivisible; that his will would be hers; and that the principle of the exclusion of females from the succession, if now established, would operate to the disqualification of their only child, a daughter.

Although the principal body of the nobility, as has been stated, supported Isabella's cause, there were a few families, and some of them the most potent in Castile, who seemed determined to abide the fortunes of her arrival. Among these was the marquis of Villena. His immense estates, stretching from Toledo to Murcia, gave him an extensive influence over the southern regions of New Castile. The duke of Arévalo possessed a similar interest in the frontier province of Estremadura. With these were combined the grand master of Calatrava and his brother, together with the young marquis of Cádiz, and, as it soon appeared, the archbishop of Toledo.

Under the auspices of this coalition, propositions were made to Alfonso the Fifth, king of Portugal, to vindicate the title of his niece Joanna to the throne of Castile, and, by espousing her, to secure to himself the same rich inheritance. Alfonso, whose victories over the Barbary Moors had given him the cognomen of 'the African', was precisely of a character to be dazzled by the nature of this enterprise. The protection of an injured princess, his near relative, was congenial with the spirit of chivalry. The conquest of an opulent territory, adjacent to his own, would not only satisfy his dreams of glory, but the more solid cravings of avarice. In this disposition he was confirmed by his son, Prince John.

Still there were a few among Alfonso's counsellors possessed of sufficient coolness to discern the difficulties of the undertaking. They reminded him that the Castilian nobles on whom he principally relied were the very persons who had formerly been most instrumental in defeating the claims of Joanna, and securing the succession to her rival; that Ferdinand was connected by blood with the most powerful families of Castile; that the great body of the people, the middle as well as the lower classes, were fully penetrated not only with a conviction of the legality of Isabella's title, but with a deep attachment to her person. On the other hand, their proverbial hatred of Portugal would make them too impatient of interference from that quarter to admit the prospect of permanent success.

These objections, sound as they were, were overruled by John's impetuosity, and the ambition or avarice of his father. War was accordingly resolved on. At the same time negotiations were entered into with the king of France, who was invited to make a descent upon Biscay, by a promise, somewhat premature, of a cession of the conquered territory.

Early in May, the king of Portugal put his army in motion, and, entering Castile by the way of Estremadura, held a northerly course towards Placencia, where he was met by the duke of Arévalo and the marquis of Villena, and by the latter nobleman presented to the princess Joanna, his destined bride. On the 12th of the month he was affianced with all becoming pomp to this lady, then scarcely thirteen years of age. A messenger was despatched to the court of Rome to solicit a dispensation for their marriage, rendered necessary by the consanguinity of the parties. The royal pair were then proclaimed, with the usual solemnities, sovereigns of Castile. Circulars were transmitted to the different cities, setting forth Joanna's title and requiring their allegiance. After some days given to festivity, the army resumed its march, still in a northerly direction, upon Arévalo, where Alfonso determined to await the arrival of the reinforcements which he expected from his Castilian allies.

Ferdinand and Isabella were so wholly unprepared at the time of Alfonso's invasion, that it is said they could scarcely bring five hundred horse to oppose it. By this opportune delay at Arévalo, they obtained space for preparation. Both of them were indefatigable in their efforts. Isabella visited in person such of the garrisoned towns as required to be confirmed in their allegiance, performing long and painful journeys on horseback with surprising celerity, and enduring fatigues, which, as she was at that time in delicate health, wellnigh proved fatal to her constitution.

By Isabella's extraordinary exertions, as well as those of her husband, the latter found himself, in the beginning of July, at the head of a force amounting in all to four thousand men-at-arms, eight thousand light horse, and thirty thousand foot, an ill-disciplined militia, chiefly drawn from the mountainous districts of the north, which manifested peculiar devotion to his cause, his partisans in the south being preoccupied with suppressing domestic revolt, and with incursions on the frontiers of Portugal.

Ferdinand arrived before Toro on July 19th, and immediately drew up his army, before its walls, in order of battle. The king of Portugal kept within his defences.

The Castilian army, from the haste with which it had been mustered, was wholly deficient in battering artillery, and in other means for annoying a fortified city; and, as its communications were cut off, in consequence of the neighbouring fortresses being in possession of the enemy, it soon became straitened for provisions. The ensuing retreat was conducted in so disorderly a manner by the mutinous soldiery that Alfonso, says a contemporary, had he but sallied with two thousand horse, might have routed and perhaps annihilated the whole army.

Fortunately, Alfonso was in no condition to profit by his success. His Castilian allies had experienced the greatest difficulty in enlisting their vassals in the Portuguese cause; and, far from furnishing him with the contingents which he had expected, found sufficient occupation in the defence of their own territories against the loyal partisans of Isabella. At the same time, numerous squadrons of light cavalry from Estremadura and Andalusia, penetrating into Portugal, carried the most terrible desolation over the whole extent of its unprotected borders. The Portuguese knights loudly murmured at being cooped up in Toro while their own country was made the theatre of war. Alfonso saw himself under the necessity of detaching so considerable a portion of his army for the defence of his frontier as entirely to cripple his future operations. So deeply, indeed, was he impressed, by these circumstances, with the difficulty of his enterprise, that, in a negotiation with the Castilian sovereigns at this time, he expressed a willingness to resign his claims to their crown in consideration of the cession of Galicia, together with the cities of Toro and Zamora, and a considerable sum of money. Ferdinand and his ministers, it is reported, would have accepted the proposal; but Isabella, although acquiescing in the stipulated money payment, would not consent to the dismemberment of a single inch of the Castilian territory.

In the meantime both the queen and her husband, undismayed by past reverses, were making every exertion for the reorganization of an army on a more efficient footing. To accomplish this object an additional supply of funds became necessary, since the treasure of King Henry had been exhausted by the preceding operations. As the nation had been too far impoverished under the late reign to admit of fresh exactions, a most extraordinary expedient was devised for meeting the stipulated requisitions. It was proposed to deliver into the royal treasury half the amount of plate belonging to the churches throughout the kingdom, to be redeemed in the term of three years, for the sum of thirty *cuentos*, or millions of maravedies. The clergy, who were very generally attached to Isabella's interests, far from discouraging this startling proposal, endeavoured to vanquish the queen's repugnance to it by arguments and pertinent illustrations drawn from Scripture.

Thus provided with the necessary funds, the sovereigns set about enforcing new levies and bringing them under better discipline, as well as providing for their equipment in a manner more suitable to the exigencies of the service than was done for the preceding army.

All parties now looked forward with eagerness to a general battle, as to a termination of the evils of this long-protracted war. The Portuguese prince, having with difficulty assembled a corps amounting to two thousand lances and eight thousand infantry, took a northerly circuit round Galicia, and effected a junction with his father in Toro, on February 14, 1476. On the night of the 17th, having first provided for the security of the city by leaving in it a powerful reserve, Alfonso drew off the residue of his army. The Portuguese army, traversing the bridge of Toro, pursued their march along the southern side of the Douro, and reached Zamora, distant only a few leagues, before the dawn.

At break of day, the Castilians were surprised by the array of floating banners and martial panoply glittering in the sun, from the opposite side of the river, while the discharges of artillery still more unequivocally announced the presence of the enemy. Ferdinand could scarcely believe that the Portuguese monarch, whose avowed object had been the relief of the castle of Zamora, should have selected a position so obviously unsuitable for this purpose. Isabella's squadrons of light cavalry, hovering on the skirts of the Portuguese camp, effectually cut off its supplies, and soon reduced it to great straits for subsistence. This circumstance, together with the tidings of the rapid advance of additional forces to the support of Ferdinand, determined Alfonso, contrary to all expectation, on an immediate retreat.

Ferdinand's troops, with all the expedition they could use, and leaving their artillery behind them, did not succeed in coming up with the enemy until nearly four o'clock in the afternoon, as the latter was defiling through a narrow pass about five miles from the city of Toro.

A council of war was then called, to decide on the expediency of an immediate assault. Notwithstanding the objections, such were the high spirit of the troops and their eagerness to come to action, sharpened by the view of the quarry, that they were thought more than sufficient to counterbalance every physical disadvantage. The question of battle was decided in the affirmative.

As the Castilian army emerged from the defile into a wide and open plain, they found that the enemy had halted and was already forming in order of battle. Ferdinand took his station in the centre, opposite his rival.

The Castilians, raising the war-cry of 'St James and St Lazarus', advanced on the enemy's left. The Portuguese men-at-arms, charging them at the same time, compelled them to fall back precipitately on the narrow pass in their rear, where, supported by some fresh detachments, they were with difficulty rallied by their officers, and again brought into the field. In the meanwhile, Ferdinand closed with the enemy's centre, and the action soon became general along the whole line.

At length, after an obstinate struggle of more than three hours, the Castilian troops prevailed, and the Portuguese were seen to give way in all directions. The duke of Alva, turning their flank, soon converted their retreat into a rout.

Queen Isabella, on receiving tidings of the event at Tordesillas, where she then was, ordered a procession to the church of St Paul in the suburbs, in which she herself joined, walking barefoot with all humility, and offered up a devout thanksgiving to the God of battles for the victory with which he had crowned her arms.

It was indeed a most auspicious victory, not so much from the immediate loss inflicted on the enemy, as from its moral influence on the Castilian nation. Such as had before vacillated in their faith, who were prepared to take sides with the strongest, now openly proclaimed their allegiance to Ferdinand and Isabella. Most of those who had been arrayed in arms, or had manifested by any other overt act their hostility to the government, vied with each other in demonstrations of the most loyal submission, and sought to make the best terms for themselves which they could. Among these latter, the duke of Arévalo, who indeed had made overtures to this effect some time previous through the agency of his son, together with the grand master of Calatrava, and the count of Ureña, his brother, experienced the lenity of government, and were confirmed in the entire possession of their estates. The two principal delinquents, the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo, made a show of resistance for some time longer; but, after witnessing the demolition of their castles, the capture of their towns, the desertion of their vassals, and the sequestration of their revenues, were fain to purchase a pardon at the price of the most humble concessions, and the forfeiture of an ample portion of domain.

The castle of Zamora, expecting no further succours from Portugal, speedily surrendered, and this event was soon followed by the reduction of Madrid, Baeza, Toro, and other principal cities. In little more than six months from the date of the battle, the whole kingdom, with the exception of a few insignificant posts, had acknowledged the supremacy of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Soon after the victory of Toro, Ferdinand was enabled to concentrate a force amounting to fifty thousand men, for the purpose of repelling the French from Guipuscoa, from which they had already twice been driven by the intrepid natives, and whence they again retired with precipitation on receiving news of the king's approach.

Alfonso, finding his authority in Castile thus rapidly melting away before the rising influence of Ferdinand and Isabella, withdrew with his virgin bride into Portugal, where he formed the resolution of visiting France in person, and soliciting succour from his ancient ally, Louis the Eleventh. In spite of every remonstrance, he put this extraordinary scheme into execution.

After waiting a whole year a needy supplicant at the court of Louis, he at length ascertained that his insidious host was concerting an arrangement with his mortal foes, Ferdinand and Isabella. Alfonso, whose character always had a spice of Quixotism in it, seems to have completely lost his wits at this last reverse of fortune. He felt himself unable to encounter the ridicule which awaited his return to Portugal, and secretly withdrew, with two or three domestics only, to an obscure village in Normandy.

The king of France, willing to be rid of his importunate guest, and unwilling perhaps to incur the odium of having driven him to so desperate an extremity as that of his projected pilgrimage, provided a fleet of ships to transport him back to his own dominions, where he arrived just five days after the ceremony of his son's coronation as king of Portugal.

Prince John, whether influenced by filial piety, or prudence, resigned the crown of Portugal to his father, soon after his return. The old monarch was no sooner reinstated in his authority, than, burning with a thirst for vengeance, which made him insensible to every remonstrance, he again prepared to throw his country into combustion by reviving his enterprise against Castile.

While these hostile movements were in progress, Ferdinand, leaving his consort in possession of a sufficient force for the protection of the frontiers, made a journey into Biscay for the purpose of an interview with his father, the king of Aragon, to concert measures for the pacification of Navarre. In the autumn of the same year a treaty of peace was definitively adjusted between the plenipotentiaries of Castile and France. It stipulated as a principal article that Louis the Eleventh should disconnect himself from his alliance with Portugal, and give no further support to the pretensions of Joanna.

Thus released from apprehension in this quarter, the sovereigns were enabled to give their undivided attention to the defence of the western borders. Isabella, accordingly, early in the ensuing winter, passed into Estremadura for the purpose of repelling the Portuguese, and still more of suppressing the insurrectionary movements of certain of her own subjects, who, encouraged by the vicinity of Portugal, carried on from their private fortresses a most desolating and predatory warfare over the circumjacent territory. Isabella, supported by a body of regular troops and a detachment of the Holy Brotherhood, took her station at Truxillo, a central position. Her counsellors remonstrated against this exposure of her person in the very heart of the disaffected country; but she replied that 'it was not for her to calculate perils or fatigues in her own cause, nor by an unseasonable timidity to dishearten her friends, with whom she was now resolved to remain until she had brought the war to a conclusion'. She then gave immediate orders for laying siege at the same time to the fortified towns of Medellín, Mérida, and Deleytosa.

At this juncture the infanta Doña Beatriz of Portugal, sister-in-law of king Alfonso, and maternal aunt of Isabella, touched with grief at the calamities, in which she saw her country involved by the chimerical ambition of her brother, offered herself as the mediator of peace between the belligerent nations. Agreeably to her proposal, an interview took place between her and queen Isabella at the frontier town of Alcántara. As the conferences were conducted in perfect good faith, and a sincere desire, on both sides, of establishing a cordial reconciliation, they resulted, after eight days' discussion, in a treaty of peace, with which the Portuguese infanta returned into her own country, in order to obtain the sanction of her royal brother. The articles contained in it, however, were too unpalatable to receive an immediate assent; and it was not until the expiration of six months, during which Isabella, far from relaxing, persevered with increased energy in her original plan of operations, that the treaty was formally ratified by the court of Lisbon.

It was stipulated in this compact that Alfonso should relinquish the title and armorial bearings, which he had assumed as king of Castile; that he should resign his claims to the hand of Joanna, and no longer maintain her pretensions to the Castilian throne; that that lady should make the election within six months, either to quit Portugal for ever, or to remain there on the condition of wedding Don John, the infant son of Ferdinand and Isabella, so soon as he should attain a marriageable age, or to retire into a convent, and take the veil; that a general amnesty should be granted to all such Castilians as had supported Joanna's cause; and, finally, that the concord between the two nations should be cemented by the union of Alonso, son of the prince of Portugal, with the infanta Isabella, of Castile.

Thus terminated, after a duration of four years and a half, the War of the Succession. The war had terminated triumphantly for Isabella, whose wise and vigorous administration, seconded by her husband's vigilance, had dispelled the storm which threatened to overwhelm her from abroad, and established her in undisturbed possession of the throne of her ancestors.

Joanna's interests were alone compromised, or rather sacrificed, by the treaty. Disgusted with a world in which she had experienced nothing but misfortune, she determined to renounce it for ever. She accordingly entered the convent of Santa Clara at Coimbra.

Not long after this event, King Alfonso resolved to imitate her example and exchange his royal robes for the humble habit of a Franciscan friar. He consequently made preparations for resigning his crown anew and retiring to the monastery of Varatojo, when he suddenly fell ill, at Cintra, of a disorder which terminated his existence on August 28, 1481.

In the beginning of the same year in which the pacification with Portugal secured to the sovereigns the undisputed possession of Castile, another crown devolved on Ferdinand by the death of his father, the king of Aragon, who expired at Barcelona, on January 20, 1479, in the eighty-third year of his age. Thus the two crowns of Aragon and Castile, after a separation of more than four centuries, became indissolubly united, and the foundations were laid of the magnificent empire which was destined to overshadow every other European monarchy.

CHAPTER VI

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF CASTILE
1475–1482

THE present chapter [is] a connected and comprehensive consideration of the important changes introduced into the interior administration of Castile after the accession of Isabella. Fortunate was it for Spain that her sceptre was swayed by a sovereign possessed of sufficient wisdom to devise, and energy to execute, the most salutary schemes of reform.

The whole plan of reform introduced into the government by Ferdinand and Isabella, or more properly by the latter, was not fully unfolded until the completion of her reign. But the most important modifications were adopted previous to the war of Granada in 1482. These may be embraced under the following heads: I The efficient administration of justice, II The codification of the laws, III The depression of the nobles, IV The vindication of ecclesiastical rights belonging to the crown from the usurpation of the papal see, V The regulation of trade, VI The preeminence of royal authority.

I. The administration of justice.—In the dismal anarchy which prevailed in Henry the Fourth's reign, the authority of the monarch and of the royal judges had fallen into such contempt that the law was entirely without force. The cities afforded no better protection than the open country. Every man's hand seemed to be lifted against his neighbour. Isabella saw no better way of checking this unbounded license than to direct against it the *Santa Hermandad*, or Holy Brotherhood.

The project for the reorganization of this institution was introduced into the cortes held in 1476. The new institution differed essentially from the ancient *hermandades*, since, instead of being partial in its extent, it was designed to embrace the whole kingdom; and, instead of being directed, as had often been the case, against the crown itself, it was set in motion at the suggestion of the latter, and limited in its operation to the maintenance of public order. The crimes reserved for its jurisdiction were all violence or theft committed on the highways or in the open country, and in cities by such offenders as escaped into the country—housebreaking, rape, and resistance of justice.

An annual contribution of eighteen thousand maravedies was assessed on every hundred *vecinos* or householders for the equipment and maintenance of a horseman, whose duty it was to arrest offenders and enforce the sentence of the law. A court of two alcaldes was established in every town containing thirty families, for the trial of all crimes within the jurisdiction of the hermandad. An appeal lay from them in specified cases to a supreme council. A general junta, composed of deputies from the cities throughout the kingdom, was annually convened for the regulation of affairs, and their instructions were transmitted to provincial juntas, who superintended the execution of them. The laws, enacted at different times in these assemblies, were compiled into a code under the sanction of the junta general at Tordelaguna, in 1485.

Notwithstanding the popular constitution of the hermandad, and the obvious advantages attending its introduction at this juncture, it experienced so decided an opposition from the nobility, who discerned the check it was likely to impose on their authority, that it required all the queen's address and perseverance to effect its general adoption. Thus a standing body of troops, two thousand in number, thoroughly equipped and mounted, was placed at the disposal of the crown, to enforce the law and suppress domestic insurrection. The supreme junta, which regulated the counsels of the hermandad, constituted moreover a sort of inferior cortes, relieving the exigencies of government, as we shall see hereafter, on more than one occasion, by important supplies of men and money. By the activity of this new military police, the country was, in the course of a few years, cleared of its swarms of banditti, as well as of the robber chieftains whose strength had enabled them to defy the law.

The important benefits resulting from the institution of the hermandad secured its confirmation by successive cortes, for the period of twenty-two years, in spite of the repeated opposition of the aristocracy. At length, in 1498, the objects for which it was established having been completely obtained, it was deemed advisable to relieve the nation from the heavy charges which its maintenance imposed. The great salaried officers were dismissed; a few subordinate functionaries were retained for the administration of justice, over whom the regular courts of criminal law possessed appellate jurisdiction. The *Santa Hermandad*, stripped of all but the terrors of its name, dwindled into an ordinary police.

Isabella was so intent on the prosecution of her schemes of reform that, even in the minuter details, she frequently superintended the execution of them herself. A remarkable exemplification of this occurred the year but one after her coronation, at Segovia. The inhabitants, secretly instigated by the bishop of that place and some of the principal citizens, rose against Cabrera, marquis of Moya, to whom the government of the city had been intrusted, and who had made himself generally unpopular by his strict discipline.

The queen, on receiving tidings of the event at Tordesillas, mounted her horse and proceeded with all possible despatch towards Segovia. Pressing forward with her little retinue through one of the gates which remained in the hands of her friends, she effected her entrance into the citadel.

She stationed herself at the further extremity of the area, and, as the populace poured in, calmly demanded the cause of the insurrection. 'Tell me,' said she, 'what are your grievances, and I will do all in my power to redress them; for I am sure that what is for your interest, must be also for mine, and for that of the whole city.' The insurgents, abashed by the unexpected presence of their sovereign as well as by her cool and dignified demeanour, replied that all they desired was the removal of Cabrera from the government of the city. 'He is deposed already,' answered the queen, 'and you have my authority to turn out such of his officers as are still in the castle, which I shall intrust to one of my own servants, on whom I can rely.' The people, pacified by these assurances, shouted, 'Long live the queen!' and eagerly hastened to obey her mandates.

Isabella proceeded with her retinue to the royal residence in the city, attended by the fickle multitude, whom she again addressed on arriving there, admonishing them to return to their vocations, as this was no time for calm inquiry, and promising that, if they would send three or four of their number to her on the morrow to report the extent of their grievances, she would examine into the affair and render justice to all parties. The queen, after a candid examination, having ascertained the groundlessness or gross exaggeration of the misdemeanours imputed to Cabrera, reinstated the deposed alcayde in the full possession of his dignities.

In the summer of the following year, 1477, Isabella resolved to pay a visit to Estremadura and Andalusia, for the purpose of composing dissensions and introducing a more efficient police.

Isabella experienced the most loyal and magnificent reception from the inhabitants of Seville, where she established her headquarters. She held her court in the saloon of the alcázar, or royal castle, where she revived the ancient practice of the Castilian sovereigns, of presiding in person over the administration of justice. Every Friday she took her seat in her chair of state, on an elevated platform covered with cloth of gold, and surrounded by her council, together with the subordinate functionaries, and the insignia of a court of justice. The members of her privy council and of the high court of criminal law sat in their official capacities every day in the week. The queen herself received such suits as were referred to her adjudication, saving the parties the usual expense and procrastination of justice.

By the extraordinary despatch of the queen and her ministers during the two months that she resided in the city, a vast number of civil and criminal causes were disposed of. Isabella was willing to temper justice with mercy, and accordingly granted an amnesty for all past offences, save heresy, on the condition, however, of a general restitution of such property as had been unlawfully seized and retained during the period of anarchy.

But Isabella became convinced that all arrangements for establishing permanent tranquillity in Seville would be ineffectual so long as the feud continued between the great families of Guzmán and Ponce de León. While the queen was hesitating as to the course she should pursue in reference to the marquis, he suddenly presented himself by night at her residence in Seville. He now eagerly proffered his allegiance to her, excusing his previous conduct as he best could. The queen was too well satisfied with the submission, however tardy, of this formidable vassal, to call him to severe account for past delinquencies. She exacted from him, however, the full restitution of such domains and fortresses as he had filched from the crown and from the city of Seville, on condition of similar concessions by his rival, the duke of Medina Sidonia. She next attempted to establish a reconciliation between these belligerent grandees; but, aware that, however pacific might be their demonstrations for the present, there could be little hope of permanently allaying the inherited feuds of a century whilst the neighbourhood of the parties to each other must necessarily multiply fresh causes of disgust, she caused them to withdraw from Seville to their estates in the country, and by this expedient succeeded in extinguishing the flame of discord.

In the following year, 1478, Isabella accompanied her husband in a tour through Andalusia, for the immediate purpose of reconnoitring the coast. In the course of this progress, they were splendidy entertained by the duke and marquis at their patrimonial estates. They afterwards proceeded to Córdova, where they adopted a similar policy with that pursued at Seville, compelling the count de Cabra, connected with the blood royal, and Alonso de Aguilar, lord of Montilla, whose factions had long desolated this fair city, to withdraw into the country and restore the immense possessions which they had usurped both from the municipality and the crown.

Nothing contributed more to re-establish the supremacy of law in this reign than the certainty of its execution, without respect to wealth or rank, for the insubordination prevalent throughout Castile was chiefly imputable to persons of this description, who, if they failed to defeat justice by force, were sure of doing so by the corruption of its ministers. Ferdinand and Isabella employed the same vigorous measures in other parts of their dominions. In Galicia alone, fifty fortresses, the strongholds of tyranny, were razed to the ground, and fifteen hundred malefactors, it was computed, were compelled to fly the kingdom.

While the sovereigns were thus personally occupied with the suppression of domestic discord, and the establishment of an efficient police, they were not inattentive to the higher tribunals, to whose keeping, chiefly, were intrusted the personal rights and property of the subject. They reorganized the royal or privy council, whose powers, although, as has been noticed in the Introduction, principally of an administrative nature, had been gradually encroaching on those of the superior courts of law. During the last century this body had consisted of prelates, knights, and lawyers, whose numbers and relative proportions had varied in different times. The right of the great ecclesiastics and nobles to a seat in it was, indeed, recognized, but the transaction of business was reserved for the counsellors specially appointed. Much the larger proportion of these, by the new arrangement, was made up of jurists, whose professional education and experience eminently qualified them for the station. The specific duties and interior management of the council were prescribed with sufficient accuracy. Its authority as a court of justice was carefully limited; but, as it was charged with the principal executive duties of government, it was consulted in all important transactions by the sovereigns, who paid great deference to its opinions and very frequently assisted at its deliberations.

No change was made in the high criminal court of *alcaldes de corte*, except in its forms of proceeding. But the royal audience, or chancery, the supreme and final court of appeal in civil causes, was entirely remodelled. The place of its sittings, before indeterminate, and consequently occasioning much trouble and cost to the litigants, was fixed at Valladolid. Laws were passed to protect the tribunal from the interference of the crown, and the queen was careful to fill the bench with magistrates whose wisdom and integrity would afford the best guaranty for a faithful interpretation of the law.

In the cortes of Madrigal (1476), and still more in the celebrated one of Toledo (1480), many excellent provisions were made for the equitable administration of justice, as well as for regulating the tribunals. The sovereigns testified their respect for the law by reviving the ancient, but obsolete practice of presiding personally in the tribunals, at least once a week. The law acquired an authority which, in the language of a Spanish writer, 'caused a decree, signed by two or three judges, to be more respected since that time, than an army before'.

II. Codification of the laws.—Whatever reforms might have been introduced into the Castilian judicatures, they would have been of little avail without a corresponding improvement in the system of jurisprudence by which their decisions were to be regulated. This was made up of the Visigothic code, as the basis, the *fueros* of the Castilian princes, as far back as the eleventh century, and the 'Siete Partidas', the famous compilation of Alfonso the Tenth, digested chiefly from maxims of the civil law. The deficiencies of these ancient codes had been gradually supplied by such an accumulation of statutes and ordinances as rendered the legislation of Castile in the highest degree complex, and often contradictory. The embarrassment resulting from this occasioned, as may be imagined, much tardiness, as well as uncertainty, in the decisions of the courts.

The nation had long felt the pressure of these evils, and made attempts to redress them in repeated cortes. But every effort proved unavailing, during the stormy or imbecile reigns of the princes of Trastamara. At length, the subject having been resumed in the cortes of Toledo, in 1480, Dr Alfonso Díaz de Montalvo, whose professional science had been matured under the reigns of three successive sovereigns, was charged with the commission of revising the laws of Castile, and of compiling a code which should be of general application throughout the kingdom.

This laborious undertaking was accomplished in little more than four years. His work, which subsequently bore the title of *Ordenanças Reales*, was published in the beginning of 1485. It was admitted as paramount authority throughout Castile; and, although the many innovations which were introduced in that age of reform required the addition of two subsidiary codes in the latter years of Isabella, the 'Ordenanças' of Montalvo continued to be the guide of the tribunals down to the time of Philip the Second.

III. Depression of the nobles.—The extent of the privileges constitutionally enjoyed by the aristocracy was such, at the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella, as to disturb the balance of the constitution, and to give serious cause of apprehension both to the monarch and the people. They had introduced themselves into every great post of profit or authority. They had ravished from the crown the estates on which it depended for its maintenance, as well as dignity. They coined money in their own mints, like sovereign princes; and they covered the country with their fortified castles, whence they defied the law and desolated the unhappy land with interminable feuds. It was obviously necessary for the new sovereigns to proceed with the greatest caution against this powerful and jealous body, and, above all, to attempt no measure of importance in which they would not be supported by the hearty co-operation of the nation.

The first measure which may be said to have clearly developed their policy was the organization of the hermandad, which, although ostensibly directed against offenders of a more humble description, was made to bear indirectly upon the nobility, whom it kept in awe by the number and discipline of its forces, and the promptness with which it could assemble them on the most remote points of the kingdom, while its rights of jurisdiction tended materially to abridge those of the seignorial tribunals.

Another measure which insensibly operated to the depression of the nobility was making official preferment depend less exclusively on rank, and much more on personal merit, than before. The nobles, finding that rank was no longer the sole, or indeed the necessary avenue to promotion, sought to secure it by attention to more liberal studies in which they were greatly encouraged by Isabella, who admitted their children into her palace, where they were reared under her own eye.

But the boldest assaults on the power of the aristocracy were made in the famous cortes of Toledo, in 1480. Such had been the royal necessities, that blank certificates of annuities assigned on the public rents were hawked about the market and sold at such a depreciated rate that the price of an annuity did not exceed the amount of one year's income. The commons saw with alarm the weight of the burdens which must devolve on them for the maintenance of the crown thus impoverished in its resources. They resolved to meet the difficulty by advising at once a resumption of the grants unconstitutionally made during the latter half of Henry the Fourth's reign and the commencement of the present. This measure, however violent and repugnant to good faith it may appear at the present time, seems then to have admitted of justification, as far as the nation was concerned, since such alienation of the public revenue was in itself illegal, and contrary to the coronation oath of the sovereign; and those who accepted his obligations held them subject to the liability of their revocation, which had frequently occurred under the preceding reigns.

As the intended measure involved the interests of most of the considerable proprietors in the kingdom, who had thriven on the necessities of the crown, it was deemed proper to require the attendance of the nobility and great ecclesiastics in cortes by a special summons, which it seems had been previously omitted. Thus convened, the legislature appears, with great unanimity and much to the credit of those most deeply affected by it, to have acquiesced in the proposed resumption of the grants, as a measure of absolute necessity. It was decided that all whose pensions had been conferred without any corresponding services on their part should forfeit them entirely; that those who had purchased annuities should return their certificates on a reimbursement of the price paid for them; and that the remaining creditors, who composed the largest class, should retain such a proportion only of their pensions as might be judged commensurate with their services to the state.

By this important reduction, the final adjustment and execution of which were intrusted to Fernando de Talavera, the queen's confessor, the gross amount of thirty millions of maravedies, a sum equal to three-fourths of the whole revenue on Isabella's accession, was annually saved to the crown. The retrenchment was conducted with such strict impartiality that the most confidential servants of the queen and the relatives of her husband were among those who suffered the most severely. No diminution whatever was made of the stipends settled on literary and charitable establishments. This resumption of the grants may be considered as the basis of these economical reforms which, without oppression to the subject, augmented the public revenue more than twelvefold during this auspicious reign.

Several other acts were passed by the same cortes, which had a more exclusive bearing on the nobility. They were prohibited from quartering the royal arms on their escutcheons, from being attended by a mace-bearer and a body-guard, from imitating the regal style of address in their written correspondence, and other insignia of royalty which they had arrogantly assumed. They were forbidden to erect new fortresses. They were expressly restrained from duels, for engaging in which the parties, both principals and seconds, were subjected to the penalties of treason.

The haughty nobility of Castile winced more than once at finding themselves so tightly curbed by their new masters. On one occasion a number of the principal grandees, with the duke of Infantado at their head, addressed a letter of remonstrance to the king and queen. The discontented lords disconcerted by rebuke, made no attempt to rally, but condescended to make their peace separately as they could, by the most ample acknowledgments.

Notwithstanding the strict impartiality as well as vigour of the administration, it could never have maintained itself by its own resources alone in its offensive operations against the high-spirited aristocracy of Castile. Its most direct approaches were made under cover of the cortes. The sovereigns showed great deference, especially in this early period of their reign, to the popular branch of this body. Far from pursuing the odious policy of preceding princes in diminishing the represented cities, they never failed to direct their writs to all those which, at their accession, retained the right of representation, and subsequently enlarged the number by the conquest of Granada, while they exercised the anomalous privilege of omitting altogether or issuing only a partial summons to the nobility. By making merit the standard of preferment, they opened the path of honour to every class of the community. They uniformly manifested the greatest tenderness for the rights of the commons in reference to taxation; and, as their patriotic policy was obviously directed to secure the personal rights and general prosperity of the people, it insured the co-operation of an ally whose weight, combined with that of the crown, enabled them eventually to restore the equilibrium which had been disturbed by the undue preponderance of the aristocracy.

The policy pursued by Ferdinand and Isabella in reference to the Military Orders of Castile, although not fully developed until a much later period, was first conceived and indeed partly executed in that now under discussion.

The uninterrupted warfare which the Spaniards were compelled to maintain for the recovery of their native land from the infidel nourished in their bosoms a flame of enthusiasm partaking in an almost equal degree of a religious and a military character. The military orders of Castile were permanently organized in the latter part of the twelfth century, from the monastic orders established for the protection of the Holy Land.

The most eminent of these was the order of St Jago, or St James, of Compostella. The miraculous revelation of the body of the Apostle, after the lapse of eight centuries from the date of his interment, and his frequent apparition in the ranks of the Christian armies in their desperate struggles with the infidel, had given so wide a celebrity to the obscure town of Compostella in Galicia, which contained the sainted relics, that it became the resort of pilgrims from every part of Christendom, during the middle ages; and the escalop shell, the device of St James, was adopted as the universal badge of the palmer. The cavaliers of the fraternity, which received its papal bull of approbation in 1175, were distinguished by a white mantle embroidered with a red cross, in fashion of a sword, with the escalop shell below the guard. The rules of the new order imposed on its members the usual obligations of obedience, community of property, and of conjugal chastity, instead of celibacy. They were, moreover, required to relieve the poor, defend the traveller, and maintain perpetual war upon the Mussulman.

The institution of the Knights of Calatrava was somewhat more romantic in its origin. That town, from its situation on the frontiers of the Moorish territory of Andalusia, where it commanded the passes into Castile, became of vital importance to the latter kingdom. Its defence was eagerly sought by a monk of a distant convent in Navarre, who had once been a soldier and whose military ardour seems to have been exalted, instead of being extinguished, in the solitude of the cloister. The monk, supported by his conventual brethren, and a throng of cavaliers and more humble followers, who sought redemption under the banner of the church, was enabled to make good his word. From the confederation of these knights and ecclesiastics sprung the military fraternity of Calatrava, which received the confirmation of the pontiff, Alexander the Third, in 1164. The rules which it adopted were those of St Benedict, and its discipline was in the highest degree austere.

The third great order of religious chivalry in Castile was that of Alcántara, which received its confirmation from Pope Alexander the Third, in 1177. It was long held in nominal subordination to the knights of Calatrava, from which it was relieved by Julius the Second, and eventually rose to an importance little inferior to that of its rival.

The internal economy of these three fraternities was regulated by the same general principles. The direction of affairs was intrusted to a council, consisting of the grand master and a number of the commanders (*comendadores*), among whom the extensive territories of the order were distributed. This council, conjointly with the grand master, or the latter exclusively, as in the fraternity of Calatrava, supplied the vacancies.

These institutions appear to have completely answered the objects of their creation. In the earlier history of the Peninsula, we find the Christian chivalry always ready to bear the brunt of battle against the Moors. The superstitious princes of those times, in addition to the wealth lavished so liberally on all monastic institutions, granted the military orders almost unlimited rights over the conquests achieved by their own valour. In the sixteenth century, we find the order of St James, which had shot up to a pre-eminence above the rest, possessed of eighty-four commanderies, and two hundred inferior benefices. The pope, to whom a contested point was not unfrequently referred, assumed at length the prerogative of granting the masterships in administration on a vacancy, and even that of nomination itself.

There was probably no one cause, among the many which occurred in Castile during the fifteenth century, more prolific of intestine discord, than the election to these posts. Isabella seems to have settled in her mind the course of policy to be adopted in this matter at a very early period of her reign. On occasion of a vacancy in the grand mastership of St James, by the death of the incumbent, in 1476, she prevailed on them, smarting, as they were, under the evils of a disputed succession to solicit the administration for the king, her husband. That monarch, indeed, consented to waive this privilege in favour of Alonso de Cárdenas, one of the competitors for the office, and a loyal servant of the crown; but, at his decease in 1499, the sovereigns retained the possession of the vacant mastership, conformably to a papal decree which granted them its administration for life, in the same manner as had been done with that of Calatrava in 1487, and of Alcántara in 1494.

The sovereigns were no sooner vested with the control of the military orders than they began with their characteristic promptness to reform the various corruptions which had impaired their ancient discipline. In the following reign, the grand masterships of these fraternities were annexed in perpetuity to the crown of Castile by a bull of Pope Adrian the Sixth. Their subordinate dignities, having survived the object of their original creation, the subjugation of the Moors, degenerated into the empty decorations, the stars and garters, of an order of nobility.

IV. Vindication of ecclesiastical rights belonging to the crown from papal usurpation.—In the earlier stages of the Castilian monarchy, the sovereigns appear to have held a supremacy in spiritual, very similar to that exercised by them in temporal matters. It was comparatively late that the nation submitted its neck to the papal yoke; but, when the code of the Partidas was promulgated in the thirteenth century, the maxims of the canon law came to be permanently established. The ecclesiastical encroached on the lay tribunals. Appeals were perpetually carried up to the Roman court; and the popes gradually converted the right of confirming elections to the episcopal and higher ecclesiastical dignities into that of appointment.

These usurpations of the church had been repeatedly the subject of grave remonstrance in cortes. Several remedial enactments had passed that body during the present reign, especially in relation to the papal provision of foreigners to benefices, an evil of much greater magnitude in Spain than in other countries of Europe.

Ferdinand and Isabella proclaimed their intention of inviting the princes of Christendom to unite with them in convoking a general council for the reformation of the manifold abuses which dishonoured the church. No sound could have grated more unpleasantly on the pontifical ear than the menace of a general council, particularly at this period, when ecclesiastical corruptions had reached a height which could but ill endure its scrutiny. The pope, convinced that he had ventured too far, accordingly despatched a legate to Spain, fully empowered to arrange the matter on an amicable basis.

The envoy so far mitigated the resentment of the sovereigns that they consented to open negotiations with the court of Rome. The result was the publication of a bull by Sixtus the Fourth, in which his Holiness engaged to provide such natives to the higher dignities of the church in Castile as should be nominated by the monarchs of that kingdom. Isabella, on whom the duties of ecclesiastical preferment devolved, by the act of settlement, availed herself of the rights thus wrested from the grasp of Rome to exalt to the vacant sees persons of exemplary piety and learning.

V. The regulation of trade.—Trade, agriculture, and every branch of industry languished under the misrule of preceding reigns. In addition, a fatal shock was given to commercial credit by the adulteration of the coin. People at length refused to receive in payment of their debts the debased coin whose value depreciated every day; and the little trade which remained in Castile was carried on by barter.

The magnitude of the evil was such as to claim the earliest attention of the cortes under the new monarchs. Acts were passed fixing the standard and legal value of the different denominations of coin. A new coinage was subsequently made. Five royal mints were alone authorized, afterwards augmented to seven, and severe penalties denounced against the fabrication of money elsewhere. The reform of the currency gradually infused new life into commerce. This was furthered by salutary laws for the encouragement of domestic industry. Internal communication was facilitated by the construction of roads and bridges. Absurd restrictions on change of residence, as well as the onerous duties which had been imposed on commercial intercourse between Castile and Aragon, were repealed. Several judicious laws were enacted for the protection of foreign trade. Others as that for relieving the importation of foreign books from all duties 'because,' says the statute, 'they bring both honour and profit to the kingdom, by the facilities which they afford for making men learned', are in advance of that age. Public credit was re-established by the punctuality with which the government redeemed the debt contracted during the Portuguese war. Notwithstanding the repeal of various arbitrary imposts, which enriched the exchequer under Henry the Fourth, such was the advance of the country under the wise economy of the present reign that the revenue was augmented nearly sixfold between the years 1477 and 1482.

VI. The pre-eminence of the royal authority.—This natural result of the policy of Ferdinand and Isabella was derived quite as much from the influence of their private characters as from their public measures. Their acknowledged talents were supported by a dignified demeanour, which formed a striking contrast with the meanness in mind and manners that had distinguished their predecessor. They both exhibited a practical wisdom in their own personal relations, which always commands respect, and which, however it may have savoured of worldly policy in Ferdinand, was, in his consort, founded on the purest and most exalted principle. Under such a sovereign, the court, which had been little better than a brothel under the preceding reign, became the nursery of virtue and generous ambition. Isabella watched assiduously over the nurture of the high-born damsels of her court, whom she received into the royal palace, causing them to be educated under her own eye, and endowing them with liberal portions on their marriage. By these and similar acts of affectionate solicitude, she endeared herself to the higher classes of her subjects, while the patriotic tendency of her public conduct established her in the hearts of the people. She possessed, in combination with the feminine qualities which beget love, a masculine energy of character, which struck terror into the guilty. She enforced the execution of her own plans, oftentimes even at great personal hazard, with a resolution surpassing that of her husband. Both were singularly temperate, indeed, frugal, in their dress, equipage, and general style of living, seeking to affect others less by external pomp than by the silent though more potent influence of personal qualities. On all such occasions as demanded it, however, they displayed a princely magnificence, which dazzled the multitude, and is blazoned with great solemnity in the garrulous chronicles of the day.

The tendencies of the administration were to strengthen the power of the crown. This was the point to which most of the feudal governments of Europe at this epoch were tending. But Isabella was far from being actuated by the selfish aim or unscrupulous policy of many contemporary princes. She endeavoured to bind together the disjointed fragments of the state, to assign to each of its great divisions its constitutional limits, and, by depressing the aristocracy to its proper level and elevating the commons, to consolidate the whole under the lawful supremacy of the crown. At least, such was the tendency of her administration up to the present period of our history. These laudable objects were gradually achieved without fraud or violence, by a course of measures equally laudable; and the various orders of the monarchy, brought into harmonious action with each other, were enabled to turn the forces which had before been wasted in civil conflict to the glorious career of discovery and conquest which was destined to run the remainder of the century.

CHAPTER VII

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MODERN INQUISITION

THE present chapter will be devoted to the establishment and early progress of the Modern Inquisition, an institution which has probably contributed more than any other cause to depress the lofty character of the ancient Spaniard.

After the Saracenic invasion, which the Jews, perhaps with reason, are accused of having facilitated, they resided in the conquered cities and were permitted to mingle with the Arabs on nearly equal terms. Their common Oriental origin produced a similarity of tastes, to a certain extent, not unfavourable to such a coalition. The Jews, under these favourable auspices, not only accumulated wealth with their usual diligence, but gradually rose to the highest civil dignities, and made great advances in various departments of letters. The schools of Córdova, Toledo, Barcelona, and Granada were crowded with numerous disciples who emulated the Arabians in keeping alive the flame of learning during the Middle Ages. They were diligent travellers in all parts of the known world, compiling itineraries which have proved of extensive use in later times, and bringing home hoards of foreign specimens and Oriental drugs that furnished important contributions to the domestic pharmacopoeias. In the practice of medicine, indeed, they became so expert as, in a manner, to monopolize that profession. They made great proficiency in mathematics and particularly in astronomy; while, in the cultivation of elegant letters, they revived the ancient glories of the Hebrew muse. This was indeed the golden age of modern Jewish literature, which under the Spanish caliphs, experienced a protection so benign, although occasionally chequered by the caprices of despotism, that it was enabled to attain higher beauty and a more perfect development in the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, than it has reached in any other part of Christendom.

The ancient Castilians of the same period, very different from their

Gothic ancestors, seem to have conceded to the Israelites somewhat of the feelings of respect which were extorted from them by the superior civilization of the Spanish Arabs. We find eminent Jews residing in the courts of the Christian princes, directing their studies, attending them as physicians, or more frequently administering their finances. We meet with Jewish scholars and statesmen attached to the courts of Alfonso the Tenth, Alfonso the Eleventh, Peter the Cruel, Henry the Second, and other princes.

But all this royal patronage proved incompetent to protect the Jews, when their flourishing fortunes had risen to a sufficient height to excite popular envy, augmented, as it was, by profuse ostentation of equipage and apparel. Stories were circulated of their contempt for the Catholic worship, their desecration of its most holy symbols, and of their crucifixion, or other sacrifice, of Christian children, at the celebration of their own passover. With these foolish calumnies, the more probable charge of usury and extortion was industriously preferred against them, till at length, towards the close of the fourteenth century, the fanatical populace, stimulated in many instances by the no less fanatical clergy, and perhaps encouraged by the numerous class of debtors to the Jews, who found this a convenient mode of settling their accounts, made a fierce assault on this unfortunate people in Castile and Aragon, breaking into their homes, violating their most private sanctuaries, scattering their costly collections and furniture, and consigning the wretched proprietors to indiscriminate massacre, without regard to sex or age. In this crisis, the only remedy left to the Jews was a real or feigned conversion to Christianity.

The legislative enactments of this period, and still more under John the Second, during the first half of the fifteenth century, were uncommonly severe upon the Jews. While they were prohibited from mingling freely with the Christians, and from exercising the professions for which they were best qualified, their residence was restricted within certain prescribed limits of the cities which they inhabited; and they were not only debarred from their usual luxury of ornament in dress, but were held up to public scorn, as it were, by some peculiar badge or emblem embroidered on their garments.

Such was the condition of the Spanish Jews at the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Notwithstanding the show of prosperity enjoyed by the converted Jews, their situation was far from secure. Their proselytism had been too sudden to be generally sincere; and, as the task of dissimulation was too irksome to be permanently endured, they gradually became less circumspect and exhibited the scandalous spectacle of apostates. The clergy, especially the Dominicans, were not slow in sounding the alarm; and the superstitious populace, easily roused to acts of violence in the name of religion, began to exhibit the most tumultuous movements, and actually massacred the constable of Castile in an attempt to suppress them at Jaén the year preceding the accession of Isabella. After this period, the complaints against the Jewish heresy became still more clamorous, and the throne was repeatedly beset with petitions to devise some effectual means for its extirpation.

It is easy to discern the secret envy entertained by the Castilians of the superior skill and industry of their Hebrew brethren, and of the superior riches which these qualities secured to them, and to suspect that the zeal of the most orthodox was considerably sharpened by worldly motives.

The cry against the Jewish abominations now became general. Among those most active in raising it, were Alfonso de Ojeda, a Dominican, prior of the monastery of St Paul in Seville, and Diego de Merlo, assistant of that city. These persons loudly called for the introduction of the Holy Office. In this they were vigorously supported by Niccoló Franco, the papal nuncio then residing at the court of Castile. Ferdinand listened with complacency to a scheme which promised an ample source of revenue in the confiscations it involved. But it was not so easy to vanquish Isabella's aversion to measures so repugnant to the natural benevolence and magnanimity of her character. Her scruples, indeed, were rather founded on sentiment than reason, the exercise of which was little countenanced in matters of faith in that day when the dangerous maxim that the end justified the means was universally received, and learned theologians seriously disputed whether it were permitted to make peace with the infidel, and even whether promises made to them were obligatory on Christians.

Isabella's serious temper, as well as early education, naturally disposed her to religious influences. Notwithstanding the independence exhibited by her in all secular affairs, in her own spiritual concerns she uniformly testified the deepest humility, and deferred too implicitly to what she deemed the superior sagacity, or sanctity, of her ghostly counsellors.

Thomas de Torquemada had earnestly laboured to infuse into Isabella's young mind, to which his situation as her confessor gave him such ready access, the same spirit of fanaticism that glowed in his own. Fortunately this was greatly counteracted by her sound understanding and natural kindness of heart. Torquemada urged her, or indeed, as is stated by some, extorted a promise that 'should she ever come to the throne, she would devote herself to the extirpation of heresy, for the glory of God, and the exaltation of the Catholic faith'. The time was now arrived when this fatal promise was to be discharged.

It was not until the queen had endured the repeated importunities of the clergy, particularly of those reverend persons in whom she most confided, seconded by the arguments of Ferdinand, that she consented to solicit from the pope a bull for the introduction of the Holy Office into Castile. Sixtus the Fourth readily complied with the petition of the sovereigns and expedited a bull November 1, 1478, authorizing them to appoint two or three ecclesiastics, inquisitors for the detection and suppression of heresy throughout their dominions. The queen, however, still averse to violent measures, suspended the operation of the ordinance, until a more lenient policy had been first tried.

On January 2, 1481, the court commenced operations by the publication of an edict, followed by several others, requiring all persons to aid in apprehending and accusing all such as they might know or suspect to be guilty of heresy, holding out the illusory promise of absolution to such as should confess their errors within a limited period. As every mode of accusation, even anonymous, was invited, the number of victims multiplied so fast that the tribunal found it convenient to remove its sittings to the spacious fortress of Triana.

The presumptive proofs by which the charge of Judaism was established against the accused are curious. It was considered good evidence of the fact if the prisoner wore better clothes or cleaner linen on the Jewish sabbath than on other days of the week; if he had no fire in his house the preceding evening; if he sat at table with Jews, or ate the meat of animals slaughtered by their hands, or drank a certain beverage held in much estimation by them; if he washed a corpse in warm water, or when dying turned his face to the wall; or, finally, if he gave Hebrew names to his children, a provision most whimsically cruel since, by a law of Henry the Second, he was prohibited under severe penalties from giving them Christian names. He must have found it difficult to extricate himself from the horns of this dilemma.

The inquisitors proceeded with a despatch which shows that they could have paid little deference even to this affectation of legal form. On the sixth day of January, six convicts suffered at the stake. Seventeen more were executed in March, and a still greater number in the month following; and by November 4th in the same year, no less than two hundred and ninety eight individuals had been sacrificed in the *autos da fe* of Seville.

The plague which desolated Seville this year, sweeping off fifteen thousand inhabitants, as if in token of the wrath of Heaven at these enormities, did not palsy for a moment the arm of the Inquisition. A similar persecution went forward in other parts of the province of Andalusia, so that within the same year, 1481, the number of the sufferers was computed at two thousand burnt alive, a still greater number in effigy, and seventeen thousand *reconciled*, a term which must not be understood by the reader to signify anything like a pardon or amnesty, but only the commutation of a capital sentence for inferior penalties, as fines, civil incapacity, very generally total confiscation of property, and not unfrequently imprisonment for life.

The Jews were astounded by the bolt which had fallen so unexpectedly upon them. Some succeeded in making their escape to Granada, others to France, Germany, or Italy, where they appealed from the decisions of the Holy Office to the sovereign pontiff. Sixtus the Fourth appears for a moment to have been touched with something like compunction, for he rebuked the intemperate zeal of the inquisitors and even menaced them with deprivation. But these feelings were but transient; for, in 1483, we find the same pontiff quieting the scruples of Isabella respecting the appropriation of the confiscated property, and encouraging both sovereigns to proceed in the great work of purification; and he concludes with imputing their successes in the Moorish war, upon which they had then entered, to their zeal for the faith, and promising them the like in future. In the course of the same year, he expedited two briefs, appointing Thomas de Torquemada inquisitor-general of Castile and Aragon, and clothing him with full powers to frame a new constitution for the Holy Office. This was the origin of that terrible tribunal, the Spanish or Modern Inquisition.

Edicts were ordered to be published annually, on the first two Sundays in lent, throughout the churches, enjoining it as a sacred duty on all, who knew or suspected another to be guilty of heresy, to lodge information against him before the Holy Office. The ministers of religion were instructed to refuse absolution to such as hesitated to comply with this, although the suspected person might stand in the relation of parent, child, husband, or wife. All accusations, anonymous as well as signed, were admitted.

The accused, in the meantime, whose mysterious disappearance was perhaps the only public evidence of his arrest, was conveyed to the secret chambers of the Inquisition, where he was excluded from intercourse with all, save a priest and his jailer, both of whom might be regarded as the spies of the tribunal. In this desolate condition, the unfortunate man cut off from external communication and all cheering sympathy or support was kept for some time in ignorance even of the nature of the charges preferred against him, and at length, instead of the original process, was favoured only with extracts from the depositions of the witnesses, so garbled as to conceal every possible clue to their name and quality. With still greater unfairness, no mention whatever was made of such testimony as had arisen in the course of the examination in his own favour. Counsel was allowed from a list presented by his judges. But this privilege availed little, since the parties were not permitted to confer together, and the advocate was furnished with no other sources of information than what had been granted to his client. To add to the injustice of these proceedings, every discrepancy in the statements of the witnesses was converted into a separate charge against the prisoner, who thus, instead of one crime, stood accused of several. This, taken in connexion with the concealment of time, place, and circumstance in the accusations, created such embarrassment that, unless the accused was possessed of unusual acuteness and presence of mind, it was sure to involve him, in his attempts to explain, in inextricable contradiction.

If the prisoner refused to confess his guilt, or, as was usual, was suspected of evasion or an attempt to conceal the truth, he was subjected to the torture. This, which was administered in the deepest vaults of the Inquisition is admitted by the secretary of the Holy Office, who has furnished the most authentic report of its transactions, not to have been exaggerated in any of the numerous narratives which have dragged these subterranean horrors into light. Should the rack, however, prove ineffectual to force a confession of his guilt, he was so far from being considered as having established his innocence that he was not unfrequently convicted on the depositions of the witnesses.

The proceedings of the tribunal were plainly characterized throughout by the most flagrant injustice and inhumanity to the accused. Instead of presuming his innocence, until his guilt had been established, it acted on exactly the opposite principle. Instead of affording him the protection accorded by every other judicature, it used the most insidious arts to circumvent and to crush him. He had no remedy against malice or misapprehension on the part of his accusers or the witnesses against him, who might be his bitterest enemies, since they were never revealed to, nor confronted with the prisoner, nor subjected to a cross-examination, which can best expose error or wilful collusion in the evidence. Its proceedings were impenetrably shrouded from the public eye, by the appalling oath of secrecy imposed on all, whether functionaries, witnesses, or prisoners, who entered within its precincts. The last, and not the least odious feature of the whole, was the connexion established between the condemnation of the accused and the interests of his judges, since the confiscations, which were the uniform penalties of heresy, were not permitted to flow into the royal exchequer until they had first discharged the expenses, whether in the shape of salaries or otherwise, incident to the Holy Office.

The last scene in this dismal tragedy was the *act of faith* (auto da fe), the most imposing spectacle probably, which has been witnessed since the ancient Roman triumph, and which, as intimated by a Spanish writer, was intended, somewhat profanely, to represent the terrors of the Day of Judgment. The effect was further heightened by the concourse of ecclesiastics in their sacerdotal robes, and the pompous ceremonial which was intended to consecrate, as it were, this bloody sacrifice.

The unfortunate convicts were clad in coarse woollen garments, styled *san benitos*, brought close round the neck and descending like a frock, down to the knees. These were yellow, embroidered with a scarlet cross, and well garnished with figures of devils and flames of fire, which, typical of the heretic's destiny hereafter, served to make him more odious in the eyes of the superstitious multitude. The greater part of the sufferers were condemned to be *reconciled*. Those who were to be *relaxed*, as it was called, were delivered over, as impenitent heretics, to the secular arm, in order to expiate their offence by the most painful of deaths, with the consciousness, still more painful, that they were to leave behind them names branded with infamy, and families involved in irretrievable ruin.

The Castilians, and the Aragonese subsequently, gave such evidence of their aversion to the institution that it can hardly be believed the clergy would have succeeded in fastening it upon them, had they not availed themselves of the popular prejudices against the Jews.

The data for an accurate calculation of the number of victims sacrificed by the Inquisition during this reign are not very satisfactory. From such as exist, however, Llorente computes that, during the eighteen years of Torquemada's ministry, there were no less than 10,220 burnt, 6,860 condemned and burnt in effigy as absent or dead, and 97,321 reconciled by various other penances, affording an average of more than 6,000 convicted persons annually.

The Inquisition involved so heavy an expenditure that a very small sum, comparatively, found its way into the exchequer to counterbalance the great detriment resulting to the state from the sacrifice of the most active and skilful part of its population. All temporal interests, however, were held light in comparison with the purgation of the land from heresy; and such augmentations as the revenue did receive, we are assured, were conscientiously devoted to pious purposes, and the Moorish war!

The Roman see, during all this time, conducting itself with duplicity, contrived to make a gainful traffic by the sale of dispensations from the penalties incurred by such as fell under the ban of the Inquisition, provided they were rich enough to pay for them, and afterwards revoking them, at the instance of the Castilian court. Meanwhile, the odium excited by the unsparing rigour of Torquemada raised up so many accusations against him that he was thrice compelled to send an agent to Rome to defend his cause before the pontiff. At length, Alexander the Sixth, in 1494, moved by these reiterated complaints, appointed four coadjutors to share with him the burdens of his office.

Many a bloody page of history attests the fact that fanaticism, armed with power, is the sorest evil which can befall a nation.

CHAPTER VIII

REVIEW OF THE POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF THE SPANISH ARABS PREVIOUS TO THE WAR OF GRANADA

TO a better understanding of the character of the Spanish Arabs, or Moors, who exercised an important influence on that of their Christian neighbours, the present chapter will be devoted to a consideration of their previous history in the Peninsula.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the causes of the brilliant successes of Mahometanism at its outset—the dexterity with which, unlike all other religions, it was raised upon, not against the principles and prejudices of preceding sects; the military spirit and discipline, which it established among all classes, so that the multifarious nations who embraced it assumed the appearance of one vast, well-ordered camp; the union of ecclesiastical with civil authority intrusted to the caliphs, which enabled them to control opinions as absolutely as the Roman pontiffs in their most despotic hour; or lastly, the peculiar adaptation of the doctrines of Mahomet to the character of the wild tribes among whom they were preached. It is sufficient to say that these latter, within a century after the coming of their apostle, having succeeded in establishing their religion over vast regions in Asia, and on the northern shores of Africa, arrived before the Straits of Gibraltar.

The causes for the invasion and conquest of Spain are to be found in the rich spoils offered by the Gothic monarchy, and in the thirst of enterprise in the Saracens, which their long uninterrupted career of victory seems to have sharpened, rather than satisfied. The fatal battle was fought in the summer of 711, about two leagues distant from Cádiz. The Goths appear never to have afterwards rallied under one head, but their broken detachments made many a gallant stand in strong positions; so that nearly three years elapsed before the final achievement of the conquest. The policy of the conquerors may be considered liberal. Christians were permitted to remain in the conquered territory in undisturbed possession of their property. They were allowed to worship in their own way; to be governed, within prescribed limits, by their own laws; to fill certain civil offices, and serve in the army; their women were invited to intermarry with the conquerors; and, in short, they were condemned to no other legal badge of servitude than the payment of somewhat heavier imposts than those exacted from their Mahometan brethren. The Christians were occasionally exposed to suffering from the caprices of despotism, and of popular fanaticism. But, on the whole, their condition may sustain an advantageous comparison with that of any Christian people under the Mussulman dominion.

After the further progress of the Arabs in Europe had been checked by the memorable defeat at Tours, their energies, no longer allowed to expand in the career of conquest, recoiled on themselves and speedily produced the dismemberment of their overgrown empire. Spain was the first of the provinces which fell off. The family of Omeya, under whom this revolution was effected, continued to occupy her throne as independent princes, from the middle of the eighth to the close of the eleventh century, a period which forms the most honourable portion of her Arabian annals.

The new government was modelled on the eastern caliphate. The sovereign was the depositary of all power, the fountain of honour, the sole arbiter of life and fortune. The country was distributed into six *capitanías*, or provinces, each under the administration of a governor, with subordinate officers to whom was intrusted a more immediate jurisdiction over the principal cities. The immense authority and pretensions of these petty satraps became a fruitful source of rebellion in later times. The caliph administered the government with the advice of his council of state, composed of his principal *cadis* and *hagibs*, or secretaries. The caliph reserved to himself the right of selecting his successor from among his numerous progeny.

The princes of the blood, instead of being condemned, as in Turkey, to waste their youth in the seclusion of the harem, were intrusted to the care of learned men, to be instructed in the duties befitting their station. They were encouraged to visit the academies, which were particularly celebrated in Córdova. Their riper years exhibited such fruits as were to be expected from their early education. The race of the Omeyades need not shrink from a comparison with any other dynasty of equal length in modern Europe. Their long reigns, the first ten of which embrace a period of two centuries and 'a half, their peaceful deaths, and unbroken line of succession in the same family for so many years, show that their authority must have been founded in the affections of their subjects.

The Spanish caliphs supported a large military force, frequently keeping two or three armies in the field at the same time. Their feuds with the eastern caliphs and the Barbary pirates required them also to maintain a respectable navy.

The munificence of the Omeyades was most ostentatiously displayed in their public edifices, palaces, mosques, hospitals, and in the construction of commodious quays, fountains, bridges, and aqueducts, which rivalled in their proportions the monuments of ancient Rome. These works, which were scattered more or less over all the provinces, contributed especially to the embellishments of Córdova, the capital of the empire. The delightful situation of this city in the midst of a cultivated plain washed by the waters of the Guadalquivir, made it very early the favourite residence of the Arabs, who loved to surround their houses, even in the cities, with groves and refreshing fountains, so delightful to the imagination of a wanderer of the desert.

We may form a sufficient notion of the taste and magnificence of this era from the remains of the far-famed mosque, now the cathedral of Córdova. This building, which still covers more ground than any other church in Christendom, was esteemed the third in sanctity by the Mahometan world.

We cannot but be astonished at the adequacy of their resources to carry such magnificent designs into execution. Their revenue amounted to eight million of *mitcales* of gold, or nearly six million sterling.

The revenue of the Cordovan sovereigns was derived from the fifth of the spoil taken in battle, an important item in an age of unintermitting war and rapine; from the enormous exaction of one-tenth of the produce of commerce, husbandry, flocks, and mines; from a capitation tax on Jews and Christians; and from certain tolls on the transportation of goods. They engaged in commerce on their own account, and drew from mines, which belonged to the crown, a conspicuous part of their income.

Before the discovery of America, Spain was to the rest of Europe what her colonies have since become, the great source of mineral wealth. The Arabs with their usual activity penetrated into these arcana of wealth. Abundant traces of their labours are still to be met with along the barren ridge of mountains that covers the north of Andalusia.

But the best mine of the caliphs was in the industry and sobriety of their subjects. The Arabian colonies have been properly classed among the agricultural. The system of irrigation which has so long fertilized the south of Spain was derived from them. They introduced into the Peninsula various tropical plants and vegetables, whose cultivation has departed with them. Sugar constituted one of the principal exports of the Spanish Arabs. Silk manufacture was carried on by them extensively. This, together with fine fabrics of cotton and wool, formed the staple of an active commerce with the Levant, and especially with Constantinople, whence they were again diffused, by means of the caravans of the north, over the comparatively barbarous countries of Christendom.

Whatever consequence a nation may derive, in its own age, from physical resources, its intellectual development will form the subject of deepest interest to posterity. The most flourishing periods of both not unfrequently coincide. Thus the reigns of Abderrahman the Third, Alhakem the Second, and the regency of Almanzor, embracing the latter half of the tenth century, during which the Spanish Arabs reached their highest political importance, may be regarded as the period of their highest civilization under the Omeyades, although the impulse then given carried them forward to still further advances in the turbulent times which followed. This beneficent impulse is, above all, imputable to Alhakem. He may be compared with the best of the Medici. He assembled the eminent scholars of his time, both natives and foreigners, at his court, where he employed them in the most confidential offices. He converted his palace into an academy, making it the familiar resort of men of letters, at whose conferences he personally assisted in his intervals of leisure from public duty. He selected the most suitable persons for the composition of works on civil and natural history, requiring the prefects of his provinces and cities to furnish, as far as possible, the necessary intelligence. He was a diligent student, and left many of the volumes which he read, enriched with his commentaries. Above all, he was intent upon the acquisition of an extensive library. He invited illustrious foreigners to send him their works, and munificently recompensed them. No donative was so grateful to him as a book. He employed agents in Egypt, Syria, Irak, and Persia, for collecting and transcribing the rarest manuscripts; and his vessels returned freighted with cargoes more precious than the spices of the east. In this way he amassed a magnificent collection.

The prefects of the provinces, emulating their master, converted their courts into academies and dispensed premiums to poets and philosophers. The stream of royal bounty awakened life in the remotest districts. But its effects were especially visible in the capital. Eighty free schools were opened in Córdova. The circle of letters and science was publicly expounded by professors whose reputation for wisdom attracted not only the scholars of Christian Spain, but of France, Italy, Germany, and the British

Isles. This period of brilliant illumination with the Saracens corresponds precisely with that of the deepest barbarism of Europe.

The Mahometan governments of that period rested on so unsound a basis that the season of their greatest prosperity was often followed by precipitate decay. This had been the case with the eastern caliphate, and was now so with the western. During the life of Alhakem's successor, the empire of the Omeyades was broken up into a hundred petty principalities. Magnificent Córdova, dwindling into a second-rate city, retained no other distinction than that of being the Mecca of Spain. These little states soon became a prey to all the evils arising out of a vicious constitution of government and religion. Almost every accession to the throne was contested by numerous competitors of the same family; and a succession of sovereigns, wearing on their brows but the semblance of a crown, came and departed, like the shadows of Macbeth. The Moslem states, thus reduced in size and crippled by faction, were unable to resist the Christian forces which were pressing on them from the north. By the middle of the ninth century, the Spaniards had reached the Douro and the Ebro. By the close of the eleventh, they had advanced their line of conquest, under the victorious banner of the Cid, to the Tagus. By the middle of the thirteenth century, the circle of the Moorish dominion had shrunk into the narrow limits of the province of Granada. On this comparatively small point of their ancient domain, the Saracens erected a new kingdom of sufficient strength to resist, for more than two centuries, the united forces of the Spanish monarchies.

The Moorish territory of Granada contained, within a circuit of about one hundred and eighty leagues, all the physical resources of a great empire. Its broad valleys were intersected by mountains rich in mineral wealth. Its pastures were fed by abundant fountains, and its coasts studded with commodious ports. In the midst, and crowning the whole, rose the beautiful city of Granada. On the summit of one of the hills of the city was erected the royal fortess or palace of the Alhambra which was capable of containing within its circuit forty thousand men. The light and elegant architecture of this edifice shows the great advancement of the art since the construction of the celebrated mosque of Córdova. Its graceful porticoes and colonnades, its domes and ceilings, its airy halls, and its fountains manifest at once the taste, opulence, and Sybarite luxury of its proprietors.

At the foot of this fabric of the genii lay the cultivated *vega*, or plain, so celebrated as the arena, for more than two centuries, of Moorish and Christian chivalry. The Arabs exhausted on it all their powers of elaborate cultivation. They distributed the waters of the Xenil, which flowed through it, into a thousand channels for its more perfect irrigation. A constant succession of fruits and crops was obtained throughout the year. Silk furnished the principal staple of a traffic that was carried on through the ports of Almería and Málaga. The Italian cities, then rising into opulence, derived their principal skill in this elegant manufacture from the Spanish Arabs.

The revenue, which was computed at twelve hundred thousand ducats, was derived from similar, but, in some respects, heavier impositions than those of the caliphs of Córdova. The crown, besides being possessed of valuable plantations in the vega, imposed the onerous tax of one-seventh on all the agricultural produce of the kingdom. The precious metals were also obtained in considerable quantities, and the royal mint was noted for the purity and elegance of its coin.

The sovereigns of Granada were for the most part distinguished by liberal tastes. They freely dispensed their revenues in the protection of letters, the construction of sumptuous public works, and, above all, in the display of a courtly pomp unrivalled by any of the princes of that period. Each day presented a succession of fêtes and tourneys. Life was with them one long carnival, and the season of revelry was prolonged until the enemy was at the gate.

During the interval which had elapsed since the decay of the Omeyades, the Spaniards had been gradually rising in civilization to the level of their Saracen enemies. While their increased consequence secured them from the contempt with which they had formerly been regarded by the Mussulmans, the latter, in their turn, had not so far sunk in the scale as to have become the objects of the bigoted aversion which was, in after days, so heartily visited on them by the Spaniards. At this period, therefore, the two nations viewed each other with more liberality probably, than at any previous or succeeding time. Their respective monarchs conducted their mutual negotiations on a footing of perfect equality.

The Moorish and Christian knights were also in the habit of exchanging visits at the courts of their respective masters. The latter were wont to repair to Granada to settle their affairs of honour by personal rencounter, in the presence of its sovereign. The disaffected nobles of Castile often sought asylum there, and served under the Moslem banner.

The government of Granada was not administered with the same tranquillity as that of Córdova. Revolutions were perpetually occurring. The kingdom, unlike that of Córdova, was so contracted in its extent that every convulsion of the capital was felt to its farthest extremities. Still, however, it held out, almost miraculously, against the Christian arms and the storms that beat upon it incessantly, for more than two centuries scarcely wore away anything from its original limits.

Several circumstances may be pointed out as enabling Granada to maintain this protracted resistance. Its concentrated population furnished such abundant supplies of soldiers that its sovereigns could bring into the field an army of a hundred thousand men. Their spacious vegas afforded an ample field for the display of their matchless horsemanship; while the face of the country, intersected by mountains and intricate defiles, gave a manifest advantage to the Arabian light-horse over the steel-clad cavalry of the Christians, and was particularly suited to the wild guerrilla warfare in which the Moors excelled. During the long hostilities almost every city had been converted into a fortress. Lastly, their early acquaintance with gunpowder contributed perhaps in some degree to prolong their precarious existence beyond its natural term. But after all, the strength of Granada lay less in its own resources than in the weakness of its enemies.

Notwithstanding the high advances made by the Arabians in almost every branch of learning, and the liberal import of certain sayings ascribed to Mahomet, the spirit of his religion was eminently unfavourable to letters.

There were several auspicious circumstances in the condition of the Spanish Arabs which distinguished them from their Mahometan brethren. The temperate climate of Spain was far more propitious to robustness and elasticity of intellect than the sultry regions of Arabia and Africa. Its long line of coast and convenient havens opened to it an enlarged commerce. Its number of rival states encouraged a generous emulation, like that which glowed in ancient Greece and modern Italy, and was infinitely more favourable to the develpement of the mental powers than the far-extended and sluggish empires of Asia. Lastly, a familiar intercourse with the Europeans served to mitigate in the Spanish Arabs some of the more degrading superstitions incident to their religion, and to impart to them nobler ideas of the independence and moral dignity of man than are to be found in the slaves of eastern despotism.

Under these favourable circumstances, provisions for education were liberally multiplied, colleges, academies, and gymnasiums springing up spontaneously, as it were, not merely in the principal cities, but in the most obscure villages of the country. The Spanish Arabs emulated their countrymen of the east in their devotion to natural and mathematical science. They contributed to astronomical knowledge by the number and accuracy of their observations, and by the improvement of instruments and the erection of observatories. They furnished their full proportion in the department of history. The treatises on logic and metaphysics amount to one-ninth of the surviving treasures of the Escurial; and, to conclude this summary, some of their scholars appear to have entered upon as various a field of philosophical inquiry as would be crowded into a modern encyclopaedia.

The results, it must be confessed, do not appear to have corresponded with this magnificent apparatus and unrivalled activity of research. The mind of the Arabians was distinguished by the most opposite characteristics, which sometimes, indeed, served to neutralize each other. An acute and subtile perception was often clouded by mysticism and abstraction. They combined a habit of classification and generalization with a marvellous fondness for detail; a vivacious fancy with a patience of application that a German of our day might envy; and, while in fiction they launched boldly into originality, indeed extravagance, they were content in philosophy to tread servilely in the track of their ancient masters.

The Saracens gave an entirely new face to pharmacy and chemistry. They introduced a great variety of salutary medicaments into Europe. The Spanish Arabs, in particular, are commended above their brethren for their observations on the practice of medicine.

In the field of history they seem to have been wholly destitute of the philosophical spirit. Hence their histories are too often mere barren chronological details, or fulsome panegyrics on their princes, unenlivened by a single spark of philosophy or criticism.

Algebra, and the higher mathematics, were taught in their schools, and thence diffused over Europe. The manufacture of paper was derived through them. Lastly, the application of gunpowder to military science, which has wrought an equally important revolution in the condition of society, was derived through the same channel.

The influence of the Spanish Arabs, however, is discernible not so much in the amount of knowledge, as in the impulse, which they communicated to the long dormant energies of Europe.

The Spanish Arabs were noted for the purity and elegance of their idiom. Their copious philological and rhetorical treastises, their arts of poetry, grammars, and rhyming dictionaries, show to what an excessive refinement they elaborated the art of composition. To poetry, indeed, especially of the tender kind, the Spanish Arabs seem to have been as indiscriminately addicted as the Italians in the time of Petrarch.

None of their writers in prose or verse show much attention to the development or dissection of character. Their inspiration exhaled in lyrical effusions, in elegies, epigrams, and idyls.

Whatever be thought of the influence of the Arabic on European literature in general, there can be no reasonable doubt that it has been considerable on the Provençal and the Castilian. In the latter especially, so far from being confined to the vocabulary or to external forms of composition, it seems to have penetrated deep into its spirit, and is plainly discernible in affectation of stateliness and oriental hyperbole, in subtilties and conceits, and in the relish for proverbs and prudential maxims.

A decided effect has been produced on the romantic literature of Europe by those tales of fairy enchantment, so characteristic of oriental genius, in which it seems to have revelled with uncontrolled delight.

It is unfortunate for the Arabians that their literature should be locked up in a character and idiom so difficult of access to European scholars. How obviously inadequate, then, are our means of forming any just estimate of their literary merits!

CHAPTER IX

WAR OF GRANADA—SURPRISE OF ZAHARA—CAPTURE OF ALHAMA—UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT ON LOJA—DEFEAT IN THE AXARQUIA

1481–1483

NO sooner had Ferdinand and Isabella restored internal tranquillity to their dominions, and made the strength effective which had been acquired by their union under one government, than they turned their eyes to those fair regions of the Peninsula over which the Moslem crescent had reigned triumphant for nearly eight centuries. Fortunately an act of aggression on the part of the Moors furnished a pretext for entering on their plan of conquest at the moment when it was ripe for execution.

Muley Abul Hacen, who succeeded his father in 1466, was of a very different temperament. His fiercy character prompted him, when very young, to violate the truce by an unprovoked inroad into Andalusia; and, although after his accession domestic troubles occupied him too closely to allow leisure for foreign war, he still cherished in secret the same feelings of animosity against the Christians. When, in 1476, the Spanish sovereigns required as the condition of a renewal of the truce, which he solicited, the payment of the annual tribute imposed on his predecessors, he proudly replied that 'the mints of Granada coined no longer gold, but steel'.

Towards the close of the year 1481 the storm which had been so long gathering burst upon Zahara, a small fortified town on the frontier of Andalusia. The garrison suffered itself to be surprised on the night of December 26th, by the Moorish monarch, who put to the sword such of the guard as offered resistance, and swept away the whole population of the place, men, women, and children, in slavery to Granada.

This disaster caused deep mortification to the Spanish sovereigns, especially to Ferdinand, by whose grandfather Zahara had been recovered from the Moors. Measures were accordingly taken for strengthening the whole line of frontier, and the utmost vigilance was exerted to detect some vulnerable point of the enemy, on which retaliation might be successfully inflicted.

It was not long before the desired opportunity for retaliation presented itself to the Spaniards. One Juan de Ortega reported to Diego de Merlo, assistant of Seville, that the fortress of Alhama, situated in the heart of the Moorish territories, was so negligently guarded that it might be easily carried by an enemy, who had skill enough to approach it. Strength of position apparently lulled its defenders into a security like that which had proved so fatal to Zahara.

Diego de Merlo, although struck with the advantages of this conquest, was not insensible to the difficulties with which it would be attended; since Alhama was sheltered under the very wings of Granada, from which it lay scarcely eight leagues distant, and could be reached only by traversing the most populous portion of the Moorish territory, or by surmounting a precipitous *sierra*, or chain of mountains, which screened it on the north. Without delay, however, he communicated the information which he had received to Don Rodrigo Ponce de León, marquis of Cádiz, as the person best fitted by his capacity and courage for such an enterprise.

Without hesitation he assumed the enterprise. He assembled a force which, including those who marched under the banner of Seville, amounted to two thousand five hundred horse and three thousand foot. The proposed route lay by the way of Antequera, across the wild sierras of Alzerifa.

On February 28th, a small party was detached, about two hours before dawn, under the command of Juan de Ortega for the purpose of scaling the citadel, while the main body moved forward more leisurely under the marquis of Cádiz, in order to support them. Ortega, followed by about thirty others, succeeded in gaining the battlements unobserved. A sentinel, who was found sleeping on his post, they at once despatched, and, proceeding cautiously forward to the guardroom, put the whole of the little garrison to the sword. The city in the meantime was alarmed, but it was too late; the citadel was taken; and the outer gates, which opened into the country, being thrown open, the marquis of Cádiz entered with trumpet sounding and banner flying, at the head of his army, and took possession of the fortress.

But the citizens of Alhama, gathering in the narrow street on which the portal of the castle opened, so completely commanded it with their arquebuses and crossbows that the Spaniards were compelled to recoil upon their defences.

A council of war was then called, in which it was resolved to demolish part of the fortifications which looked towards the town, and at all hazards to force a passage into it. This resolution was at once put into execution, the marquis, at the head of his men-at-arms, shouting his war-cry of 'St James and the Virgin'.

The Moors, unshaken by the fury of this assault, received the assailants with brisk and well-directed volleys. The contest hardly slackened till the close of day. At length, however, Spanish valour proved triumphant in every quarter.

Alhama was now delivered up to the sack of the soldiery, and rich indeed was the booty which fell into their hands—gold and silver plate, pearls, jewels, fine silks and cloths, curious and costly furniture, and all the various appurtenances of a thriving, luxurious city. Thus fell the ancient city of Alhama, the first conquest, achieved with a gallantry and daring unsurpassed by any other during this memorable war.

This disaster fell like the knell of their own doom on the ears of the inhabitants of Granada. The old king, Abul Hacen, however, far from resigning himself to useless lamentations sought to retrieve his loss by the most vigorous measures. A body of a thousand horse was sent forward to reconnoitre the city, while he prepared to follow with as powerful levies as he could enforce of the militia of Granada.

The conquest of Alhama diffused general satisfaction throughout Castile, and was especially grateful to the sovereigns, who welcomed it as an auspicious omen of the ultimate success of their designs upon the Moors. The prudent Ferdinand was revolving in his mind the course best to be adopted. He reflected that the Castilians would soon be beleaguered by an overwhelming force from Granada, and he determined at all hazards to support them. Towards evening, the king set forward on his journey to the south, escorted by nobles and cavaliers, leaving the queen to follow more leisurely, after having provided reinforcements and supplies requisite for the prosecution of the war.

On March 5th, the king of Granada appeared before the walls of Alhama, with an army which amounted to three thousand horse and fifty thousand foot. The Moslem troops called loudly to be led to the attack. They had marched from Granada with so much precipitation that they were wholly unprovided with artillery, in the use of which they were expert for that period, and which was now the more necessary, as the Spaniards had diligently employed the few days which intervened since their occupation of the place in repairing the breaches in the fortifications and in putting them in a posture of defence. But the Moorish ranks were filled with the flower of their chivalry; and their immense superiority of numbers enabled them to make their attacks simultaneously on the most distant quarters of the town, with such unintermitted vivacity that the little garrison, scarcely allowed a moment for repose, was wellnigh exhausted with fatigue.

At length, however, Abul Hacen, after the loss of more than two thousand of his bravest troops in these precipitate assaults, became convinced of the impracticability of forcing a position whose natural strength was so ably seconded by the valour of its defenders, and he determined to reduce the place by the more tardy but certain method of blockade.

Under depressing circumstances, the indomitable spirit of the marquis of Cádiz seemed to infuse itself into the hearts of his soldiers. Soon after the occupation of Alhama, the marquis, foreseeing the difficulties of his situation, had despatched missives requesting the support of the principal lords and cities of Andalusia. In this summons he had omitted the duke of Medina Sidonia, as one who had good reason to take umbrage at being excluded from a share in the original enterprise. Henrique de Guzmán, duke of Medina Sidonia, notwithstanding his deadly feud with the marquis of Cádiz, had the generosity to march to the relief of the marchioness when beleaguered, during her husband's absence, by a party of Moors from Ronda, in her own castle of Arcos. He now showed a similar alacrity in sacrificing all personal jealousy at the call of patriotism.

No sooner did he learn the perilous condition of his countrymen in Alhama than he mustered five thousand horse and forty thousand foot. The duke of Medina Sidonia, at the head of this powerful body, set forward without delay.

The Moorish monarch, alarmed at he approach of so powerful a reinforcement, saw himself in danger of being hemmed in between the garrison on the one side and these new enemies on the other. Without waiting their appearance on the crest of the eminence which separated him from them, he hastily broke up his encampment, on March 29th, after a siege of more than three weeks, and retreated on his capital.

The two commanders, embracing each other in the presence of their united armies, pledged themselves to a mutual oblivion of all past grievances, thus affording to the nation the best possible earnest of future successes, in the voluntary extinction of a feud which had desolated it for so many generations. The combined armies proceeded to evacuate Alhama, and having left in garrison Don Diego Merlo, with a corps of troops of the hermandad, returned into their own territories.

King Ferdinand had pressed forward his march, by the way of Córdova, as far as Lucena. On receiving intelligence that the siege was raised, he returned to Córdova, where he was joined by the queen towards the latter part of April. Isabella had been employed in making vigorous preparation for carrying on the war, by enforcing the requisite supplies, and summoning the crown vassals, and the principal nobility of the north, to hold themselves in readiness to join the royal standard in Andalusia. After this, she proceeded by rapid stages to Córdova, notwithstanding the state of pregnancy in which she was then far advanced.

Here the sovereigns received the unwelcome information that the king of Granada, on the retreat of the Spaniards, had again sat down before Alhama, having brought with him artillery, from the want of which he had suffered so much in the preceding siege. Many recommended the total evacuation of a place, 'which', they said, 'was so near the capital that it must be perpetually exposed to sudden and dangerous assaults; while, from the difficulty of reaching it, it would cost the Castilians an incalculable waste of blood and treasure in its defence'.

Isabella was far from being shaken by these arguments. 'Glory,' she said, 'was not to be won without danger. The strong and central position of Alhama made it of the last importance, since it might be regarded as the key of the enemy's country. This was the first blow struck during the war, and honour and policy alike forbade them to adopt a measure, which could not fail to damp the ardour of the nation.' This opinion of the queen, thus decisively expressed, determined the question, and kindled a spark of her own enthusiasm in the breasts of the most desponding.

It was settled that the king should march to the relief of the besieged, taking with him the most ample supplies of forage and provisions, at the head of a force strong enough to compel the retreat of the Moorish monarch. This was effected without delay; and, Abul Hacen once more breaking up his camp on the rumour of Ferdinand's approach, the latter took possession of the city without opposition, on May 14th. After the ceremony of purification, the three principal mosques of the city were consecrated by the cardinal of Spain as temples of Christian worship. Bells, crosses, a sumptuous service of plate, and other sacred utensils, were liberally furnished by the queen. Ferdinand, having strengthened the garrison with new recruits, and victualled it with three months provisions, prepared for a foray into the vega of Granada. This he executed in the true spirit of that merciless warfare so repugnant to the more civilized usage of later times, not only by sweeping away the green, unripened crops, but by cutting down the trees and eradicating the vines, and then, without so much as having broken a lance in the expedition, returned in triumph to Córdova.

Isabella, meanwhile, was engaged in active measures for prosecuting the war. She issued orders to the various cities of Castile and León, as far as the borders of Biscay and Guipuscoa, prescribing the *repartimiento*, or subsidy of provisions, and the quota of troops, to be furnished by each district respectively, together with an adequate supply of ammunition and artillery. The whole were to be in readiness before Loja, by July 1st.

Loja stands not many leagues from Alhama, on the banks of the Xenil; but the city is deeply intrenched among hills so rugged that it has been led not inappropriately to assume as the motto on its arms, 'A flower among thorns'. Under the Moors, it was defended by a strong fortress, while the Xenil, circumscribing it like a deep moat upon the south, formed an excellent protection against the approaches of a besieging army, since the river was fordable only in one place, and traversed by a single bridge, which might be easily commanded by the city. In addition to these advantages, the king of Granada, taking warning from the fate of Alhama, had strengthened its garrison with three thousand of his choicest troops, under the command of a skilful and experienced warrior named Ali Atar.

In the meanwhile, the efforts of the Spanish sovereigns to procure supplies adequate to the undertaking against Loja had not been crowned with success. Ferdinand on mustering his army, towards the latter part of June, found that it did not exceed four thousand horse and twelve thousand, or indeed, according to some accounts, eight thousand foot, most of them raw militia, who, poorly provided with military stores and artillery, formed a force obviously inadequate to the magnitude of his enterprise. But Ferdinand burned with a desire for distinction in the new war, and suffered his ardour for once to get the better of his prudence. Ferdinand arrived before Loja on July 1st.

A large detachment of the army was ordered to occupy a lofty eminence, at some distance, called the Heights of Albohacen, and to fortify it with such few pieces of ordnance as they had, with the view of annoying the city. Before the intrenchment could be fully completed, Ali Atar made a sortie from the town for the purpose of dislodging his enemies. The latter poured out from their works to encounter him; but the Moslem general, scarcely waiting to receive the shock, wheeled his squadrons round and began a precipitate retreat. The Spaniards eagerly pursued; but, when they had been drawn to a sufficient distance from the redoubt, a party of

Moorish *ginetes*, or light cavalry, darted from their place of concealment, and galloping into the deserted camp plundered it of its contents, including the lombards, or small pieces of artillery. The Castilians, too late perceiving their error, halted from the pursuit and returned with as much speed as possible to the defence of their camp. Ali Atar, turning also, hung close on their rear. When the Christians arrived at the summit of the hill, they found themselves hemmed in between the two divisions of the Moorish army. A brisk action ensued and lasted nearly an hour. The Christians sustained a heavy loss, particularly in the death of Rodrigo Tellez Girón, grand master of Calatrava. His death threw a general gloom over the army.

Ferdinand resolved to fall back as far as Río Frio and await there the arrival of fresh reinforcements to enforce a more rigorous blockade.

Orders were accordingly issued to the cavaliers occupying the Heights of Albohacen to break up their camp and fall back on the main body of the army. This was executed on the following morning before dawn, being July 4th. No sooner did the Moors of Loja perceive their enemy abandoning his strong position than they sallied forth. An alarm instantly spread through the whole camp. Instead of standing to their defence, each one thought only of saving himself by as speedy a flight as possible. In vain did Ferdinand, riding along their broken files, endeavour to reanimate their spirits and restore order.

The Moors began at length to slacken their efforts, and finally allowed Ferdinand to draw off his forces without further opposition. The king, abandoning all thoughts of offensive operations for the present, soon after returned to Córdova.

The loss must have been very considerable, including the greater part of the baggage and the artillery. It occasioned deep mortification to the queen; but it proved a salutary lesson. It showed the importance of more extensive preparations for a war.

At this juncture, a division among the Moors themselves did more for the Christians than any successes of their own. This division grew out of the vicious system of polygamy. The old king of Granada had become so deeply enamoured of a Greek slave that the Sultana Zoraya, jealous lest the offspring of her rival should supplant her own in the succession, secretly contrived to stir up a spirit of discontent with her husband's government. The insurrection soon spread among the populace.

A war now burst forth in the capital which deluged its streets with the blood of its citizens. At length the sultana triumphed; Abul Hacen was expelled from Granada and sought a refuge in Málaga. Granada, and by far the larger portion of the kingdom, proclaimed the authority of his elder son, Abu Abdallah, or Boabdil, as he is usually called by the Castilian writers.

No military operations worthy of notice occurred during the remainder of the campaign, except occasional *cavalgadas* or inroads, on both sides.

Towards the end of October, the court passed from Córdova to Madrid, with the intention of remaining there the ensuing winter. The importance of domestic concerns did not prevent Ferdinand and Isabella from giving attention to what was passing abroad.

The position of the Italian states, at this period, whose petty feuds seemed to blind them to the invasion which menaced them from the Ottoman empire, was such as to excite a lively interest throughout Christendom, and especially in Ferdinand, as sovereign of Sicily. He succeeded, by means of his ambassadors at the papal court, in opening a negotiation between the belligerents, and in finally adjusting the terms of a general pacification, signed December 12th, 1482. This is the first instance of Ferdinand's interference in the politics of Italy, in which at a later period he was destined to act so prominent a part.

The affairs of Navarre at this time were such as to engage still more deeply the attention of the Spanish sovereigns. The crown of that kingdom had devolved, on the death of Leonora, the sister of Ferdinand, on her grandchild, Francis Phoebus, whose mother, Magdeleine of France, held the reins of government during her son's minority. The near relationship of this princess to Louis the Eleventh gave that monarch an absolute influence in the councils of Navarre. He made use of this to bring about a marriage between the young king, Francis Phoebus, and Joanna Beltraneja, Isabella's former competitor for the crown of Castile, notwithstanding this princess had long since taken the veil in the convent of Santa Clara at Coimbra. It is not easy to unravel the tortuous politics of King Louis. The death of the king of France fortunately relieved the sovereigns from apprehensions of any immediate annoyance on that quarter.

Amid manifold concerns, Ferdinand and Isabella kept their thoughts anxiously bent on their great enterprise, the conquest of Granada. But the sovereigns experienced great embarrassment from the want of funds. Under these circumstances, they obtained from the pope a grant of one hundred thousand ducats, to be raised out of the ecclesiastical revenues in Castile and Aragon. A bull of crusade was also published by his Holiness. In addition to these resources, the government was enabled on its own credit, justified by the punctuality with which it had redeemed its past engagements, to negotiate considerable loans with several wealthy individuals.

With these funds the sovereigns entered into extensive arrangements for the ensuing campaign, causing cannon, after the rude construction of that age, to be fabricated at Huesca, and a large quantity of stone balls, then principally used, to be manufactured in the Sierra de Constantina, while the magazines were carefully provided with ammunition and military stores.

While the court was detained in the north, tidings were received of a reverse sustained by the Spanish arms, which plunged the nation in sorrow far deeper than that occasioned by the rout at Loja. Don Alonso de Cárdenas, grand master of St James, an old and confidential servant of the crown, had been intrusted with the defence of the frontier of Ecija. While on this station, he was strongly urged to make a descent on the environs of Málaga.

On Wednesday, March 19th, this gallant little army marched forth from the gates of Antequera. The number of foot, which is uncertain, appears to have been considerably less than that of the horse, which amounted to about three thousand.

The Spaniards, after plundering the deserted hamlets of whatever remained, as well as of the few stragglers, whether men or cattle, found still lingering about them, set them on fire. In this way they advanced with the usual devastation that accompanied these ferocious forays, until the columns of smoke and fire which rose above the hill-tops announced to the people of Málaga the near approach of an enemy.

The Castilian army, in the meantime, went forward with a buoyant and reckless confidence, and with very little subordination. The grand master of St James was the only leader who kept his columns unbroken, and marched forward in order of battle. Things were in this state, when the Moorish cavalry, suddenly emerging from one of the mountain passes, appeared before the astonished rearguard of the Christians. The Moors spurred on to the assault, but the well disciplined chivalry of St James remained unshaken. The grand master despatched a message to the marquis of Cádiz, requesting his support.

A council of war was then called. All further progress seemed to be effectually intercepted. The country was everywhere in arms. The most that could now be hoped, was that they might be suffered to retire unmolested with such plunder as they had already acquired.

The little army commenced its movement with undiminished spirit. But it was now embarrassed with the transportation of its plunder, and by the increasing difficulties of the sierra, which, as they ascended its sides, was matted over with impenetrable thickets and broken up by formidable ravines or channels cut deep into the soil by the mountain torrents. The Moors were now seen mustering in considerable numbers along the heights, and, being trained by early and assiduous practice, the shots from their arquebuses and cross-bows frequently found some assailable point in the harness of the Spanish men-at-arms. At length, the army, through the treachery or ignorance of the guides, was suddenly brought to a halt by arriving in a deep glen or enclosure whose rocky sides rose with such boldness as to be scarcely practicable for infantry, much less for horse. To add to their distresses, daylight, without which they could scarcely hope to extricate themselves, was fast fading away.

In this extremity no other alternative seemed to remain than to attempt to regain the route from which they had departed. As all other considerations were now subordinate to those of personal safety, it was agreed to abandon the spoil.

The marquis of Cádiz, guided by a trusty adalid, and accompanied by sixty or seventy lances, was fortunate enough to gain a circuitous route less vigilantly guarded by the enemy, whose attention was drawn to the movements of the main body of the Castilian army. But the grand master and his associates, missing this track in the darkness of the night, or perhaps preferring another, breasted the sierra in a part where it proved extremely difficult of ascent.

The following morning the Castilians, having surmounted the crest of the eminence, began the descent into the opposite valley, which was commanded on every point by their vigilant adversary. Despair now was in every eye, all subordination was at an end. Each sought only his own safety, without regard to his comrade. Some threw away their arms, hoping by this means to facilitate their escape, while in fact it only left them more defenceless against the shafts of their enemies. Some, oppressed with fatigue and terror, fell down and died without so much as receiving a wound. The panic was such that, in more than one instance, two or three Moorish soldiers were known to capture thrice their own number of Spaniards. Some, losing their way, strayed back to Málaga and were made prisoners by females of the city, who overtook them in the fields. Others escaped to Alhama or other distant places, after wandering seven or eight days among the mountains, sustaining life on such wild herbs and berries as they could find, and lying close during the day. A greater number succeeded in reaching Antequera, and, among these, most of the leaders of the expedition.

The slain in the two days' actions is admitted by the Spanish writers to have exceeded eight hundred, with double that number of prisoners. The best blood of Andalusia was shed on this occasion.

Some imputed the failure of the expedition to treachery in the adalides, some to want of concert among the commanders.

CHAPTER X

WAR OF GRANADA—GENERAL VIEW OF THE POLICY PURSUED IN THE CONDUCT OF THIS WAR

1483–1487

THE young monarch Abu Abdallah was probably the only person in Granada who did not receive with unmingled satisfaction the tidings of the rout in the Axarquia. He beheld with secret uneasiness the laurels thus acquired by the old king his father, or rather by his ambitious uncle El Zagal, whose name now resounded from very quarter as the successful champion of the Moslems. He saw the necessity of some dazzling enterprise, if he would maintain an ascendency even over the faction which had seated him on the throne. He accordingly projected an excursion which, instead of terminating in a mere border foray, should lead to the achievement of some permanent conquest.

He found no difficulty, while the spirits of his people were roused, in raising a force of nine thousand foot and seven hundred horse, the flower of Granada's chivalry.

The advance of the party was not conducted so cautiously but that it reached the ear of Don Diego Fernández de Córdova, *alcayde de los donzeles*, or captain of the royal pages, who commanded in the town of Lucena, which he rightly judged was to be the principal object of attack. He transmitted the intelligence to his uncle the count of Cabra, a nobleman of the same name with himself, who was posted at his own town of Baena, requesting his support.

The Moorish army lay siege to Lucena about April 21st.

The count of Cabra, in the meanwhile, who had lost no time in mustering his levies, set forward at the head of a small but well-appointed force. The Granadine infantry, anxious only for the preservation of their valuable booty, scarcely waited for the encounter, before they began a dastardly retreat, and left the battle to the cavalry. The latter, composed, as has been said, of the strength of the Moorish chivalry, men accustomed in many a border foray to cross lances with the best knights of Andalusia, kept their ground with their wonted gallantry. The conflict, so well disputed, remainded doubtful for some time, until it was determined by the death of the veteran chieftain Ali Atar.

The enemy, disheartened by this loss, soon began to give ground. But, though hard pressed by the Spaniards, they retreated in some order until they reached the borders of the Xenil, which were thronged with the infantry attempting a passage across the stream, swollen by excessive rains. The confusion now became universal, horse and foot mingling together, each one, heedful only of life, no longer thought of his booty. The young king Abdallah, finding his steed too jaded, quietly dismounted and sought shelter among the reedy thickets. In this lurking place, however, he was discovered by a common soldier named Martín Hurtado, who, without recognising his person, instantly attacked him. The prince defended himself with his scimitar, until Hurtado, being joined by two of his countrymen, succeeded in making him prisoner. The men, overjoyed at their prize (for Abdallah had revealed his rank, in order to secure his person from violence), conducted him to their general, the count of Cabra. The latter received the royal captive with a generous courtesy.

Nearly the whole of the Moslem cavalry were cut up, or captured, in this fatal action. Many of them were persons of rank, commanding high ransoms. The loss inflicted on the infantry was also severe, including the whole of their dear-bought plunder.

Great was the consternation occasioned by the return of the Moorish fugitives to Granada, and loud was the lament through its populous streets. The pride of many a noble house was laid low on that day, and their king (a thing unprecedented in the annals of the monarchy) was a prisoner in the land of the Christians.

The sultana Zoraya, however, was not of a temper to waste time in useless lamentation. She was aware that a captive king, who held his title by so precarious a tenure as did her son Abdallah, must soon cease to be a king even in name. She accordingly despatched a numerous embassy to Córdova, with proffers of ransom for the prince's liberation.

King Ferdinand, who was at Vitoria with the queen when he received tidings of the victory of Lucena, hastened to the south to determine on the destination of his royal captive. A debate of some warmth occurred in the royal council at Córdova, respecting the policy to be pursued. The various arguments were submitted to the queen, who still held her court in the north, and who decided for the release of Abdallah as a measure best reconciling sound policy with generosity to the vanquished.

The terms of the treaty, although sufficiently humiliating to the Moslem prince, were not materially different from those proposed by the sultana Zoraya. It was agreed that a truce of two years should be extended to Abdallah, and to such places in Granada as acknowledged his authority. He stipulated to surrender four hundred Christian captives without ransom, to pay twelve thousand doblas of gold annually to the Spanish sovereigns, and to permit a free passage, as well as furnish supplies, to their troops passing through his territories for the purpose of carrying on the war against that portion of the kingdom which still adhered to his father. Abdallah moreover bound himself to appear when summoned by Ferdinand, and to surrender his own son, with children of his principal nobility, as sureties for his fulfilment of the treaty. Thus did the unhappy prince barter away his honour and his country's freedom for the possession of immediate, but most precarious sovereignty. After ceremonies so humiliating to the Moorish prince, notwithstanding the veil of decorum studiously thrown over them, he set out with his attendants for his capital.

No siege or single military achievement of great moment occurred until nearly four years from this period, in 1487, although, in the intervening time, a large number of fortresses and petty towns, together with a very extensive tract of territory, were recovered from the enemy. Without pursuing the chronological order of events, it is probable that the end of history will be best attained by presenting a concise view of the general policy pursued by the sovereigns in the conduct of the war.

The Moorish wars under preceding monarchs had consisted of little else than *cavalgadas*, or inroads into the enemy's territory, which, pouring like a torrent over the land, swept away whatever was upon the surface, but left it in its essential resources wholly unimpaired. The bounty of nature soon repaired the ravages of man, and the ensuing harvest seemed to shoot up more abundantly from the soil, enriched by the blood of the husbandman. A more vigorous system of spoliation was now introduced. Instead of one campaign, the army took the field in spring and autumn, intermitting its efforts only during the intolerable heats of summer, so that the green crop had no time to ripen ere it was trodden down under the iron heel of war.

The apparatus for devastation was also on a much greater scale than had ever before been witnessed. From the second year of the war, thirty thousand foragers were reserved for this service, which they effected by demolishing farm-houses, granaries, and mills, by eradicating the vines, and laying waste the olive-gardens and plantations of oranges, almonds, mulberries, and all the rich varieties that grew luxuriant in this highly favoured region. This merciless devastation extended for more than two leagues on either side of the line of march. At the same time, the Mediterranean fleet cut off all supplies from the Barbary coast, so that the whole kingdom might be said to be in a state of perpetual blockade.

The Moors, although naturally a luxurious people, were patient of suffering and capable of enduring great privation. Other measures, therefore, of a still more formidable character, became necessary in conjunction with this rigorous system of blockade.

The Moorish towns were for the most part strongly defended. This strength of fortification, combined with that of position, frequently enabled a slender garrison to laugh to scorn all the efforts of the proudest Castilian armies.

The Spanish sovereigns were convinced that they must look to their artillery as the only effectual means for the reduction of these strongholds. In this, they as well as the Moors were extremely deficient. Isabella caused the most skilful engineers and artisans to be invited into the kingdom from France, Germany, and Italy. By these efforts, unremittingly pursued during the whole of the war, Isabella assembled a train of artillery such as was probably not possessed at that time by any other European potentate.

Still the clumsy construction of the ordnance betrayed the infancy of the art. The balls were sometimes of iron, but more usually of marble.

Transportation was not the least of the difficulties which the Spaniards had to encounter in this war. An immense body was constantly employed in constructing roads for the artillery across these sierras.

The Moors were deficient in heavy ordnance. The weapons on which they chiefly relied for annoying the enemy at a distance were the arquebus and cross-bow, with the last of which they were unerring marksmen. They adopted a custom, rarely met with in civilized nations of any age, of poisoning their arrows.

Ferdinand, who appeared at the head of his armies throughout the whole of this war, pursued a sagacious policy in reference to the beleaguered cities. He was ever ready to meet the first overtures to surrender in the most liberal spirit. It was, perhaps, a counterpart of the same policy which led Ferdinand to chastise any attempt at revolt on the part of his new Moorish subjects, the Mudejares, as they were called, with an unsparing rigour, which merits the reproach of cruelty.

Isabella, solicitous for everything that concerned the welfare of her people, sometimes visited the camp in person, encouraging the soldiers to endure the hardships of war, and relieving their necessities by liberal donations of clothes and money. She caused also a number of large tents, known as 'the queen's hospitals', to be always reserved for the sick and wounded, and furnished them with the requisite attendants and medicines, at her own charge. This is considered the earliest attempt at the formation of a regular camp hospital, on record.

Isabella may be regarded as the soul of this war. She engaged in it with the most exalted views, less to acquire territory than to re-establish the empire of the Cross over the ancient domain of Christendom. The queen, who as their hereditary sovereign received a more deferential homage from her Castilian subjects than Ferdinand, frequently wrote to her nobles in the camp, complimenting some on their achievements, and others less fortunate on their intentions, thus cheering the hearts of all, and stimulating them to deeds of heroism. On the most deserving she freely lavished those honours which cost little to the sovereign but are most grateful to the subject.

The duration of the war of Granada was such as to raise the militia throughout the kingdom nearly to a level with regular troops. Although the burden of the war bore most heavily on Andalusia, from its contiguity to the scene of action, yet recruits were drawn in abundance from the most remote provinces, as Galicia, Biscay, and the Asturias, from Aragon, and even the transmarine dominions of Sicily.

The brilliant successes of the Spanish sovereigns diffused general satisfaction throughout Christendom, and volunteers flocked to the camp from France, England, and other parts of Europe, eager to participate in the glorious triumphs of the Cross. Among these was a corps of Swiss mercenaries. Their example no doubt contributed to the formation of the invincible Spanish infantry, which, under the Great Captain and his successors decided the fate of Europe for more than half a century.

The pomp with which the military movements were conducted in these campaigns gave the scene rather the air of a court pageant than that of the stern array of war. The potent and wealthy barons exhibited in the camp all the magnificence of princes, the pavilions decorated with various-coloured pennons, and emblazoned with the armorial bearings of their ancient houses. They vied with each other in the costliness of their apparel, equipage, and plate, and in the variety and delicacy of the dainties with which their tables were covered.

Ferdinand and Isabella saw with regret this lavish ostentation, and privately remonstrated with some of the principal grandees on its evil tendency, especially in seducing the inferior and poorer nobility into expenditures beyond their means. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of the sovereigns against this ostentation of luxury, they were not wanting in the display of royal state and magnificence on all suitable occasions.

The sovereigns did not neglect, in a war like the present, an appeal to the religious principle so deeply seated in the Spanish character. All their public acts ostentatiously proclaimed the pious nature of the work in which they were engaged. They were attended in their expeditions by churchmen of the highest rank. The queen at Córdova celebrated the tidings of every new success over the infidel by solemn procession and thanksgiving, with her whole household as well as the nobility, foreign ambassadors, and municipal functionaries. In like manner, Ferdinand, on the return from his campaigns, was received at the gates of the city and escorted in solemn pomp beneath a rich canopy of state to the cathedral church, where he prostrated himself in grateful adoration of the Lord of hosts. Their triumphant progress in the war was constantly transmitted to the pope, who returned his benediction, accompanied by more substantial marks of favour, in bulls of crusade, and taxes on ecclesiastical rents.

The ceremonials observed on the occupation of a new conquest were such as to affect the heart no less than the imagination. 'The royal *alferez*,' says Marineo, 'raised the standard of the Cross while the priests chanted the glorious anthem, *Te Deum laudamus*. The ensign or pennon of St James, the chivalric patron of Spain, was then unfolded, and all invoked his blessed name. Lastly was displayed the banner of the sovereigns, emblazoned with the royal arms, at which the whole army shouted forth, as if with one voice, "Castile, Castile!" After these solemnities, a bishop led the way to the principal mosque, which, after the rites of purification, he consecrated to the service of the true faith.'

Ever since the victory of Lucena, the sovereigns had made it a capital point of their policy to foment the dissensions of their enemies. Notwithstanding these auxiliary circumstances, the progress of the Christians was comparatively slow. Every cliff seemed to be crowned with a fortress; and every fortress was defended with the desperation of men willing to bury themselves under its ruins.

No effectual and permanent resistance, however, could be opposed to the Christians. Tower and town fell. After a second and desperate siege in the spring of 1486, the Spaniards advanced their line of conquest more than twenty leagues beyond the western frontier of Granada.

Thus the strong posts, which may be regarded as the exterior defences of the city of Granada, were successively carried.

A few positions alone remained of sufficient strength to keep the enemy at bay. The most considerable of these was Málaga, which from its maritime situation afforded facilities for a communication with the Barbary Moors that the vigilance of the Castilian cruisers could not entirely intercept. On this point, therefore, it was determined to concentrate all the strength of the monarchy, by sea and land, in the ensuing campaign of 1487.

CHAPTER XI

INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE KINGDOM—INQUISITION IN ARAGON

1483–1487

IN such intervals of leisure as occurred amid their military operations, Ferdinand and Isabella were diligently occupied with the interior government of the kingdom, and especially with the rigid administration of justice. The queen found especial demand for this in the northern provinces. She compelled the great nobles to lay aside their arms and refer their disputes to legal arbitration. She caused a number of the fortresses, which were still garrisoned by the baronial banditti, to be razed to the ground; and she enforced the utmost severity of the law against such inferior criminals as violated the public peace.

Even ecclesiastical immunities, which proved so effectual a protection in most countries at this period, were not permitted to screen the offender. Isabella uniformly resisted every attempt from that quarter to encroach on the royal prerogative. The tendency of her administration was to abridge the authority which that body had exercised in civil matters under preceding reigns.

Worthy of record is the introduction of the modern Inquisition into Aragon. The ancient tribunal had existed there since the middle of the thirteenth century, but no sooner was the institution organized on its new basis in Castile than Ferdinand resolved on its introduction, in a similar form, in his own dominions.

The new institution, opposed to the ideas of independence common to all the Aragonese, was particularly offensive to the higher orders, many of whose members, including persons filling the most considerable official stations, were of Jewish descent.

The Inquisition commenced operations and *autos da fe* were celebrated at Saragossa in May and June, in 1485. The discontented Aragonese, despairing of redress in any regular way resolved to intimidate their oppressors by some appalling act of violence. They formed a conspiracy for the assassination of Arbues, the most odious of the inquisitors established over the diocese of Saragossa.

Arbues was on his knees before the great altar of the cathedral, near midnight, when his enemies, who had entered the church in two separate bodies, suddenly surrounded him. One of them wounded him in the arm with a dagger, while another dealt him a fatal blow in the back of his neck.

The event did not correspond with the expectations of the conspirators. Sectarian jealousy proved stronger than hatred of the Inquisition. The populace, ignorant of the extent or ultimate object of the conspiracy, were filled with vague apprehensions of an insurrection of the new Christians, who had so often been the objects of outrage; and they could only be appeased by the archbishop of Saragossa, riding through the streets, and proclaiming that no time should be lost in detecting and punishing the assassins. This promise was abundantly fulfilled.

The failure of the attempt to shake off the tribunal served only, as usual in such cases, to establish it more firmly than before. Efforts at resistance were subsequently, but ineffectually, made in other parts of Aragon, and in Valencia and Catalonia. It was not established in the latter province till 1487, and some years later in Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles. Thus Ferdinand had the melancholy satisfaction of riveting the most galling yoke ever devised by fanaticism round the necks of a people who till that period had enjoyed probably the greatest degree of constitutional freedom which the world had witnessed.

CHAPTER XII

WAR OF GRANADA—SURRENDER OF VÉLEZ MÁLAGA—SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF MÁLAGA—CONQUEST OF BAZA—SUBMISSION OF EL ZAGAL

1487–1489

BEFORE commencing operations against Málaga, it was thought expedient by the Spanish council of war to obtain possession of Vélez Málaga, situated about five leagues distant from the former. This strong town stood along the southern extremity of a range of mountains that extend to Granada. Its position afforded an easy communication with that capital, and obvious means of annoyance to an enemy interposed between itself and the adjacent city of Málaga. The reduction of this place, therefore, became the first object of the campaign.

The forces assembled at Córdova amounted to twelve thousand horse and forty thousand foot. King Ferdinand put himself at the head of this formidable host.

At length El Zagal, having been foiled in a well-concerted attempt to surprise the Christian quarters by night, was driven across the mountains by the marquis of Cádiz and compelled to retreat on his capital.

Ferdinand conducted the siege with his usual vigour and spared no exposure of his person to peril or fatigue. At length, the inhabitants of Vélez, seeing the ruin impending from the bombardment of the Christians, whose rigorous blockade both by sea and land excluded all hopes of relief from without, consented to capitulate on the usual conditions of security to persons, property, and religion. The capitulation, April 27, 1487, was followed by that of more than twenty places of inferior note lying between it and Málaga. The approaches to this latter city were now left open to the victorious Spaniards.

This ancient city, which, under the Spanish Arabs in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, formed the capital of an independent principality, was second only to the metropolis itself, in the kingdom of Granada. The city was encompassed by fortifications of great strength, and in perfect repair. Málaga was well prepared for a siege by supplies of artillery and ammunition. Its ordinary garrison was reinforced by volunteers from the neighbouring towns, and by a corps of African mercenaries. The command of this important post had been intrusted by El Zagal to a noble Moor named Hamet Zeli.

Ferdinand broke camp before Vélez on May 7th and advanced with his whole army as far as Bezmillana, about two leagues distant from Málaga. The line of march now lay through a valley commanded at the extremity nearest the city by two eminences, the one on the sea coast, the other facing the fortress of the Gebalfaro, and forming part of the wild sierra which overshadowed Málaga on the north. The enemy occupied both these important positions. A corps of Galicians were sent forward to dislodge them from the eminence towards the sea, but it failed in the assault.

A similar fate attended the assault on the sierra. The exulting cries of the enemy, after the Moorish custom, rose high and shrill above the din of battle. Here, however, they speedily rallied, and, being reinforced, advanced to the charge a third time with such inflexible courage as bore down all opposition and compelled the enemy, exhausted, or rather overpowered by superior numbers, to abandon his position. At the same time the rising ground on the seaside was carried by the Spaniards.

As it was evening, the army did not defile into the plains around Málaga before the following morning. The blockade was completed by a fleet of armed vessels, galleys and caravels, which effectually cut off all communication by water.

The first operations of the Spaniards were on the land side of the city. A breach was soon made in the wall. Every avenue of communication was strictly guarded, and every preparation was made for reducing the town by regular blockade. In addition to the cannon brought round by water from Vélez, the heavier lombards were now conducted to the camp.

Isabella had proposed to join her husband before Vélez. Without hesitation, she now set forward, accompanied by the cardinal of Spain and other dignitaries of the church, together with the Infanta Isabella and a courtly train of ladies and cavaliers. Hope now brightened every countenance.

Ferdinand now pointed his heaviest guns against its walls. Before opening his fire, however, he again summoned the place, offering the usual liberal terms in case of immediate compliance. They made answer by a more lively cannonade along the whole line of ramparts and fortresses which overhung the city.

The Moors were mindful of the importance of Málaga. They made several attempts to relieve it, whose failure was less owing to the Christians than to treachery and their own miserable feuds.

Meanwhile, the city of Málaga, whose population was greatly swelled by the influx of its foreign auxiliaries, began to be straitened for supplies. Its distress was aggravated by the spectacle of abundance which reigned throughout the Spanish camp.

The incessant cannonade by the besieging army, in the meantime, so far exhausted their ammunition that they were constrained to seek supplies from the most distant parts of the kingdom, and from foreign countries. The Castilian army, swelled by daily augmentations, varied, according to different estimates, from sixty to ninety thousand men.

Hitherto, Ferdinand, relying on the blockade and yielding to the queen's desire to spare the lives of her soldiers, had formed no regular plan of assault upon the town. But, as the season rolled on, he resolved to storm the works. Large wooden towers on rollers were constructed and provided with drawbridges and ladders, which, when brought near to the ramparts, would open a descent into the city. Galleries were also wrought. The whole of these operations was placed under the direction of Francisco Ramírez, the celebrated engineer of Madrid.

But the Moors countermined the assailants and, encountering them in subterraneous passages, drove them back and demolished the framework of the galleries. At the same time, a little squadron of armed vessels, which had been riding in safety under the guns of the city, pushed out and engaged the Spanish fleet. Thus the battle raged with fire and sword, above and under ground, along the ramparts, the ocean, and the land.

But no virtue nor valour could avail the unfortunate Malagans against the overwhelming force of their enemies. A mine was sprung near a tower, and the Spaniards, carrying the tower, obtained possession of this important pass into the beleaguered city. For these and other signal services during the siege, Francisco Ramírez, the master of the ordnance, received the honours of knighthood from the hand of King Ferdinand.

The citizens of Málaga, dismayed at beholding the enemy established in their defences, and fainting under exhaustion from a siege which had already lasted more than three months, now began to murmur at the obstinacy of the garrison, and to demand a capitulation. A deputation of the principal inhabitants was despatched to the Christian quarters, with the offer to capitulate on the same liberal conditions which had been uniformly granted by the Spaniards. The king refused.

Ferdinand's answer spread general consternation throughout Málaga.

After a tumultuous debate, the deputies were despatched a second time to the Christian camp, charged with propositions in which concession was mingled with menace. Ferdinand, unmoved by these menaces, coolly replied that he saw no occasion to change his former determination; but they might rest assured, if they harmed a single hair of a Christian, he would put every soul in the place, man, woman, and child, to the sword.

For the last time, therefore, the deputies issued from the gates of the city, charged with an epistle to the sovereigns from their unfortunate countrymen, in which, after deprecating their anger and lamenting their own blind obstinacy, they reminded their highnesses of the liberal terms which their ancestors had granted to Córdova, Antequera, and other cities, after a defence as pertinacious as their own. They expatiated on the fame which the sovereigns had established by the generous policy of their past conquests, and, appealing to their magnanimity, concluded with submitting themselves, their families, and their fortunes to their disposal. Twenty of the principal citizens were then delivered up as hostages for the peaceable demeanour of the city until its occupation by the Spaniards.

On the appointed day, the troops were posted on their respective stations along the fortifications, and the banners of Christian Spain triumphantly unfurled from the towers of the city where the crescent had been displayed for an uninterrupted period of nearly eight centuries.

On August 18th, somewhat more than three months from the date of opening trenches, Ferdinand and Isabella made their entrance into the conquered city, attended by the court, the clergy, and the whole of their military array. The fortress of Gebalfaro surrendered on the day after the occupation of Málaga by the Spaniards.

The doom of the vanquished was now to be pronounced. The whole population of the city was commanded to repair to the great courtyard of the alcazaba, which was overlooked on all sides by lofty ramparts garrisoned by the Spanish soldiery. The dreadful doom of slavery was denounced on the assembled multitude. One-third was to be transported into Africa in exchange for an equal number of Christian captives detained there; and all who had relatives or friends in this predicament were required to furnish a specification of them. Another third was appropriated to reimburse the state for the expenses of the war. The remainder were to be distributed as presents at home and abroad.

As it was apprehended that the Malagans, rendered desperate by the prospect of a hopeless, interminable captivity, might destroy or secrete their jewels, plate, and other precious effects rather than suffer them to fall into the hands of their enemies, Ferdinand devised a politic expedient for preventing it. He proclaimed that he would receive a certain sum, if paid within nine months, as the ransom of the whole population, and that their personal effects should be admitted in part payment. This sum averaged about thirty doblas a head. The ransom proved more than the unhappy people could raise, either by themselves, or agents employed to solicit contributions among their brethren of Granada and Africa. At the same time, it so far deluded their hopes that they gave in a full inventory of their effects to the treasury. By this shrewd device Ferdinand obtained complete possession both of the persons and property of his victims.

The fate of Málaga decided that of Granada. The latter was now shut out from the most important ports along her coast, and she could hardly hope more than to postpone the inevitable hour of dissolution.

The first care of the sovereigns was directed towards repeopling the depopulated city with their own subjects. Houses and lands were freely granted to such as would settle there. Numerous towns and villages with a wide circuit of territory were placed under its civil jurisdiction, and it was made the head of a diocese embracing most of the recent conquests in the south and west of Granada. These inducements, combined with the natural advantages of position and climate, soon caused the tide of Christian population to flow into the deserted city; but it was very long before it again reached the degree of commercial consequence to which it had been raised by the Moors.

After these salutary arrangements, the Spanish sovereigns led back their victorious legions in triumph to Córdova, whence dispersing to their various homes, they prepared, by a winter's repose, for new campaigns and more brilliant conquests.

In the autumn of 1487, Ferdinand and Isabella, accompanied by the royal family, visited Aragon to obtain the recognition from the cortes of Prince John's succession, now in his tenth year, as well as to repress the disorders into which the country had fallen during the long absence of its sovereigns.

The sovereigns, after accomplishing the objects of their visit, and obtaining an appropriation from the cortes for the Moorish war, passed into Valencia, where measures of like efficiency were adopted. From Valencia the court proceeded to Murcia, where Ferdinand, in June, 1488, assumed the command of an army amounting to less than twenty thousand men, a small force compared with those usually levied on these occasions, it being thought advisable to suffer the nation to breathe a while after the exhausting efforts in which it had been unintermittingly engaged for so many years.

Ferdinand, crossing the eastern borders of Granada, kept along the southern slant of the coast as far as Almería, whence he marched by a a northerly circuit on Baza, for the purpose of reconnoitring its position, as his numbers were altogether inadequate to its siege.

During the winter of 1488, Ferdinand and Isabella occupied themselves with the interior government of Castile, particularly the administration of justice. A commission was specially appointed to supervise the conduct of the corregidors and subordinate magistrates.

While at Valladolid, the sovereigns received an embassy from Maximilian, son of the emperor Frederic the Fourth of Germany, soliciting their co-operation in his designs against France for the restitution of his late wife's rightful inheritance, the duchy of Burgundy, and engaging in turn to support them in their claims on Roussillon and Cerdagne. The Spanish monarchs, although they entered into the proposed treaty of alliance with Maximilian, do not seem to have contemplated any movement of importance before the termination of the Moorish war. The Flemish ambassadors, after being entertained for forty days in a style suited to impress them with high ideas of the magnificence of the Spanish court, and of its friendly disposition towards their master, were dismissed with costly presents, and returned to their own country.

These negotiations show the increasing intimacy growing up between the European states, who, as they settled their domestic feuds, had leisure to turn their eyes abroad, and enter into international politics. The tenor of this treaty indicates also the direction which affairs were to take when the great powers should be brought into collision with each other on a common theatre of action.

All thoughts were now concentrated on the prosecution of the war with Granada, which, it was determined, should be conducted on a more enlarged scale than it had yet been. The great object proposed in this campaign was the reduction of Baza, the capital of that division of the empire which belonged to El Zagal. Besides this important city, that monarch's dominions embraced the wealthy seaport of Almería, Guadix, and numerous other towns and villages of less consequence, together with the mountain region of the Alpuxarras, rich in mineral wealth, whose inhabitants, famous for the perfection to which they had carried the silk manufacture, were equally known for their enterprise and courage in war, so that El Zagal's division comprehended the most potent and opulent portion of the empire.

In the spring of 1489, the Castilian court passed to Jaén, at which place the queen was to establish her residence. Ferdinand advanced as far as

Sotogordo, where, on May 27th, he put himself at the head of about fifteen thousand horse and eighty thousand foot. The first point against which operations were directed was the strong post of Cuxar, two leagues only from Baza, which surrendered after a brief but desperate resistance. The occupation of this place and some adjacent fortresses left the approaches open to El Zagal's capital. In the midst of the plain adjoining the suburbs, might be decried the orchard or garden of Baza, a league in length, covered with a thick growth of wood.

The first operation, after the Christian army had encamped before the walls of Baza, was to get possession of the garden, without which it would be impossible to enforce a thorough blockade, since its labyrinth of avenues afforded the inhabitants abundant facilities of communication with the surrounding country. The combat was carried on, hand to hand, in the utmost confusion. Still the Spaniards pressed forward, and after a desperate struggle for twelve hours, the enemy were beaten back behind the intrenchments that covered the suburbs, and the Spaniards, hastily constructing a defence of palisades, pitched their tents on the field of battle. The ground was too much broken, and obstructed with wood, to afford a suitable place for a general encampment.

A council of war was summoned to deliberate on the course next to be pursued. The chiefs were filled with despondency, as they revolved the difficulties of their situation. They almost despaired of enforcing the blockade of a place whose peculiar situation gave it such advantages. Many of the council urged Ferdinand to break up his position at once and postpone all operations on Baza until the reduction of the surrounding country should make it comparatively easy. Ferdinand, as usual in similar exigencies, resolved to take counsel of the queen.

Without assuming the responsibility of deciding the proposed question, however, she besought her husband not to distrust the providence of God, which had conducted them through so many perils towards the consummation of their wishes. She reminded him that the Moorish fortunes were never at so low an ebb as at present, and that their own operations could probably never be resumed on such a formidable scale or under so favourable auspices as now, when their arms had not been stained with a single important reverse. She concluded with the assurance that, if his soldiers would be true to their duty, they might rely on her for the faithful discharge of hers in furnishing them with all the requisite supplies.

The exhilarating tone of this letter had an instantaneous effect. Every heart seemed now intent on furthering the wishes of their heroic queen.

The army was distributed into two encampments, one under the marquis duke of Cádiz, the other under King Ferdinand on the opposite side of the city. To connect the two camps, it became necessary to get possession of this ground, and to clear it of the heavy timber with which it was covered.

The work did not advance more than ten paces a day, and was not completed before the expiration of seven weeks. When the ancient groves were levelled to the ground, preparations were made for connecting the two camps. The investment of the city was complete on the side of the vega. By the opposite sierra two stone walls, separated by a deep trench, were made to run along the rocky heights and ravines of the mountains until they touched the extremities of the fortifications on the plain. Thus Baza was encompassed. The work occupied ten thousand men for two months.

El Zagal was kept in check by the fear of leaving his own territory open to his rival, should he march against the Christians. Abdallah, meanwhile lay inactive in Granada, incurring the odium and contempt of his people.

While the camp lay before Baza, a singular mission was received from the sultan of Egypt, who had been solicited by the Moors of Granada to interpose in their behalf with the Spanish sovereigns. The sultan's communication, however, had no power to shake the purposes of Ferdinand and Isabella.

In the meanwhile, the siege went forward with spirit. Although some months elapsed, the besieged rejected with scorn every summons to surrender, relying on their own resources, and still more on the tempestuous season of autumn, now fast advancing. In order to guard against these impending evils, Ferdinand caused more than a thousand houses, or rather huts, to be erected, with walls of earth or clay, and roofs made of timber and tiles.

During the five months which the siege had now lasted, the weather had proved uncommonly propitious to the Spaniards. As the autumnal season advanced, however, one of those storms predicted by the people of Baza burst forth with incredible fury, pouring a volume of waters down the rocky sides of the sierra, which, mingling with those of the vega, inundated the camp of the besiegers and swept away most of the frail edifices constructed for the use of the common soldiery. A still greater calamity befell them in the dilapidation of the roads, which were rendered perfectly impassable. All communication was of course suspended with Jaén, and a temporary interruption of the convoys filled the camp with consternation. This disaster, however, was speedily repaired by the queen.

Isabella's next care was to assemble new levies of troops to relieve or reinforce those now in the camp. But her chief solicitude was to devise expedients for meeting the enormous expenditures incurred by the protracted operations of the year. For this purpose she had recourse to loans from individuals and religious corporations. As a deficiency still remained, the queen, as a last resource, pawned the crown jewels and her own personal ornaments to the merchants of Barcelona and Valencia.

Notwithstanding the vigour with which the siege was pressed, Baza made no demonstration of submission. The garrison was greatly reduced in number; the ammunition was nearly expended; yet there still remained abundant supplies of provisions in the town, and no signs of despondency appeared among the people.

The camp of the besiegers, meanwhile, was greatly wasted both by sickness and the sword. Many, desponding under perils and fatigues, which seemed to have no end, earnestly solicited the queen's appearance in the camp.

Isabella yielded to the general wish, and on November 7th arrived before the camp, attended by the infanta Isabella, the cardinal of Spain, her friend the marchioness of Moya, and other ladies of the royal household.

The Moors probably interpreted Isabella's visit into an assurance that the Christian army would never rise from before the place until its surrender. Accordingly, a few days after the queen's arrival, we find them proposing a parley for arranging terms of capitulation.

On the third day after her arrival, Isabella reviewed her army, after which she proceeded to reconnoitre the beleaguered city. On the same day, a conference was opened with the enemy through the *comendador* of León; and an armistice arranged, to continue until the old monarch, El Zagal, then at Guadix, could be informed of the real condition of the besieged.

The alcayde of Baza represented to his master the low state to which the garrison was reduced. The Moslem prince, confessing his inability to relieve him, authorized him to negotiate the best terms of surrender which he could, for himself and garrison.

A mutual desire of terminating the protracted hostilities infused a spirit of moderation into both parties, which greatly facilitated the adjustment of the articles. Ferdinand showed none of the arrogant bearing which marked his conduct towards the unfortunate people of Málaga. The principal stipulations of the treaty were that the foreign mercenaries employed in the defence of the place should be allowed to march out with the honours of war, that the city should be delivered up to the Christians, but that the natives might have the choice of retiring with their personal effects, or of occupying the suburbs, as subjects of the Castilian crown, liable only to the same tribute which they paid to their Moslem rulers, and secured in the enjoyment of their property, religion, laws, and usages.

On December 4, 1489, Ferdinand and Isabella took possession of Baza. The brave alcayde, Cidi Yahye, experienced a reception from the sovereigns very different from that of the bold defender of Málaga. Loaded with civilities and presents, he expressed a willingness to enter into their service.

Cidi Yahye was soon prevailed on to visit his royal kinsman El Zagal, at Guadix, for the purpose of urging his submission to the Christian sovereigns. In his interview with that prince, he represented the fruitlessness of any attempt to withstand the accumulated forces of the Spanish monarchies. The unfortunate monarch, after a long and deep meditation, replied with the resignation characteristic of the Moslems, 'What Allah wills, he brings to pass in his own way. Had he not decreed the fall of Granada, this good sword might have saved it; but his will be done!' It was then arranged, that the principal cities of Almería, Guadix, and their dependencies, constituting the domain of El Zagal, should be formally surrendered by that prince to Ferdinand and Isabella.

On December 7th, therefore, the Spanish sovereigns, without allowing themselves or their jaded troops any time for repose, marched out of the gates of Baza, towards Almería.

At no great distance from Almería, Ferdinand was met by El Zagal. Ferdinand rode by his side towards Almería.

This city was one of the most precious jewels in the diadem of Granada. It had amassed great wealth by its extensive commerce with Syria, Egypt, and Africa. It might have stood a siege as long as that of Baza, but it was now surrendered without a blow, on conditions similar to those granted to the former city. The sovereigns established a strong garrison there, and then, striking again into the recesses of the mountains, marched on Guadix, which, after some opposition on the part of the populace, threw open its gates to them. The surrender of these principal cities was followed by that of all the subordinate dependencies belonging to El Zagal's territory. To all these places the same liberal terms, in regard to personal rights and property, were secured, as to Baza.

The Spanish sovereigns, having accomplished the object of the campaign, after stationing part of their forces on such points as would secure the permanence of their conquests, returned with the remainder to Jaén, where they disbanded the army on January 4, 1490. The losses sustained by the troops during the whole period of their prolonged service greatly exceeded those of any former year, amounting to not less than twenty thousand men, by far the larger portion of whom are said to have fallen victims to diseases incident to severe and long-continued hardships and exposure.

Thus terminated the eighth year of the war of Granada, a year more glorious to the Christian arms, and more important in its results, than any of the preceding. During this period, an army of eighty thousand men had kept the field amid all the inclemencies of winter for more than seven months, an effort scarcely paralleled in these times, when both the amount of levies, and period of service, were on the limited scale adapted to the exigencies of feudal warfare.

The history of this campaign is, indeed, most honourable to the courage, constancy, and thorough discipline of the Spanish soldier, and to the patriotism and general resources of the nation, but most of all to Isabella. She it was who fortified the timid councils of the leaders after the disasters of the garden, and encouraged them to persevere in the siege. She procured all the supplies, constructed the roads, took charge of the sick, and furnished at no little personal sacrifice, the immense sums demanded for carrying on the war; and, when at last the hearts of the soldiers were fainting under long-protracted sufferings, she appeared among them to cheer their faltering spirits, and inspire them with her own energy. The attachment to Isabella seemed to be a pervading principle which animated the whole nation by one common impulse, impressing a unity of design on all its movements. The chivalrous heart of the Spaniard did homage to her, as to his tutelar saint; and she held a control over her people such as no man could have acquired in any age—and probably no woman in an age and country less romantic.

CHAPTER XIII

WAR OF GRANADA—SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF THE CITY OF GRANADA

1490–1492

IN the spring of 1490, ambassadors arrived from Lisbon for the purpose of carrying into effect the treaty of marriage which had been arranged between Alonso, heir of the Portuguese monarchy, and Isabella, infanta of Castile. The ceremony of the affiancing took place at Seville in April. It was followed by a succession of splendid fêtes and tourneys.

The following autumn the infanta was escorted into Portugal by the cardinal of Spain, the grand master of St James, and a numerous and magnificent retinue. Unfortunately, these fair auspices were destined to be clouded too soon by the death of the prince, her husband.

No sooner had the campaign of the preceding year been brought to a close than Ferdinand and Isabella sent an embassy to the king of Granada, requiring a surrender of his capital, conformably to his stipulations at Loja, which guaranteed this, on the capitulation of Baza, Almería, and Guadix. That time had now arrived. King Abdallah, however, excused himself from obeying the summons of the Spanish sovereigns, replying that he was no longer his own master, and that, although he had all the inclination to keep his engagements, he was prevented by the inhabitants of the city, now swollen much beyond its natural population, who resolutely insisted on its defence.

The people of Granada resumed all at once their ancient activity, foraying into the Christian territories, and stirring up the spirit of revolt in Guadix and other conquered cities. Granada seemed to revive at the very moment when exertion became hopeless.

Ferdinand was not slow in retaliating these acts of aggression. In the spring of 1490, he marched with a strong force into the cultivated plain of Granada, sweeping off, as usual, the crops and cattle, and rolling the tide of devastation up to the very walls of the city. In the following autumn, Ferdinand repeated his ravages in the vega, and, at the same time appearing before the disaffected city of Guadix with a force large enough to awe it into submission.

The winter of 1490 was occupied with preparations for the campaign against Granada. Ferdinand took command of the army in the month of April, 1491, with the purpose of sitting down before the Moorish capital, not to rise until its final surrender. The troops, which mustered in the Val de Velillos, are computed by most historians at fifty thousand horse and foot.

On the 26th of the month, the army encamped near the fountains of Ojos de Huescar, about two leagues distant from Granada. Ferdinand's first move was to detach a considerable force for the purpose of scouring the fruitful regions of the Alpuxarras, which served as the granary of the capital. This service was performed with such unsparing rigour that no less than twenty-four towns and hamlets in the mountains were ransacked and razed to the ground.

Notwithstanding the failure of all external resources, Granada was still formidable from its position and its defences. On the east it was fenced in by a wild mountain barrier, the Sierra Nevada, whose snow-clad summits diffused a grateful coolness over the city through the sultry heats of summer. The side towards the vega, facing the Christian encampment, was encircled by walls and towers of massive strength. In front of the city, for nearly ten leagues, lay the magnificent vega.

The inhabitants of Granada sallied forth in small bodies, or singly, challenging the Spaniards to equal encounter. Numerous combats took place between the high-mettled cavaliers on both sides.

The festivities, which reigned throughout the camp on the arrival of Isabella, did not divert her attention from the stern business of war. She superintended the military preparations, and personally inspected every part of the encampment.

To provide comfortable winter quarters for the army, should the siege be so long protracted as to require it, it was resolved to build a town of substantial edifices on the place of the present encampment. The plan was immediately put in execution. In less than three months, this stupendous task was accomplished.

The whole army was desirous that the new city should bear the name of their illustrious queen; but Isabella modestly declined this tribute, and bestowed on the place the title of Santa Fe, in token of unshaken trust in Divine Providence.

The erection of Santa Fe by the Spaniards struck a greater damp into the people of Granada than the most successful military achievement could have done. They began to suffer the rigorous blockade which effectually excluded supplies from their own territories, while all communication with Africa was jealously intercepted. Symptoms of insubordination had begun to show themselves among the overgrown population of the city, as it felt more and more the pressure of famine. In this crisis Abdallah and his principal counsellors became convinced that the place could not be maintained much longer; and in October propositions were made to open a negotiation for the surrender of the place.

The Spanish sovereigns intrusted the negotiation to their secretary Fernando de Zafra and to Gonsalvo de Córdova, the latter of whom was selected for this delicate business from his uncommon address and his familiarity with the Moorish habits and language. Thus the capitulation of Granada was referred to the man who acquired in her long wars the military science which enabled him, at a later period, to foil the most distinguished generals in Europe.

The conferences were conducted by night with the utmost secrecy, sometimes within the walls of Granada. At length the terms of capitulation were definitively settled and ratified by the respective monarchs on November 25, 1491.

The conditions were more liberal than those granted to Baza. The inhabitants of Granada were to retain possession of their mosques, with the free exercise of their religion. They were to be judged by their own laws, under their own cadis or magistrates, subject to the general control of the Castilian governor. They were to be unmolested in their ancient usages, manners, language, and dress, to be protected in the full enjoyment of their property, with the right of disposing of it on their own account, and of migrating when and where they would, and to be furnished with vessels for the conveyance of such as chose within three years to pass into Africa. No heavier taxes were to be imposed than those customarily paid to their Arabian sovereigns, and none whatever before the expiration of three years. King Abdallah was to reign over a specified territory in the Alpuxarras, for which he was to do homage to the Castilian crown. The artillery and the fortifications were to be delivered into the hands of the Christians, and the city was to be surrendered in sixty days from the date of the capitulation.

When the fact of the capitulation became known, the agitation speedily mounted into an open insurrection which menaced the safety of the city, as well as of Abdallah's person. In this alarming state of things, it was thought best by that monarch's counsellors to anticipate the appointed day of surrender. January 2, 1492, was accordingly fixed on for that purpose.

Every preparation was made by the Spaniards for performing this last act of the drama with suitable pomp and effect. On the morning of the 2nd, Cardinal Mendoza was sent forward at the head of a large detachment to occupy the Alhambra preparatory to the entrance of the sovereigns. As the column under the grand cardinal advanced up the Hill of Martyrs, he was met by Abdallah, attended by fifty cavaliers, who, descending the hill, rode up to the position occupied by Ferdinand on the banks of the Xenil.

The procession took up its march towards the city, 'the king and queen moving in the midst', says an historian, 'emblazoned with royal magnificence; and, as they were in the prime of life, and had now achieved the completion of this glorious conquest, they seemed to represent even more than their wonted majesty'.

The sequel of Abdallah's history is soon told. Like his uncle, El Zagal, he pined away in his barren domain of the Alpuxarras. In the following year, he passed over to Fez with his family, and soon after fell in battle in the service of an African prince, his kinsman.

The fall of Granada excited general sensation throughout Christendom, where it was received as counterbalancing, in a manner, the loss of Constantinople, nearly half a century before. At Rome the event was commemorated by a solemn procession of the pope and cardinals to St Peter's, where high mass was celebrated, and the public rejoicing continued for several days.

Thus ended the war of Granada which is often compared by the Castilian chroniclers to that of Troy in its duration, and which certainly fully equalled the latter in variety of picturesque and romantic incidents, and in circumstances of poetical interest. The surrender terminated the Arabian empire in the Peninsula after an existence of seven hundred and forty-one years. The consequences of this war were of the highest moment to Spain. Most obvious was the recovery of an extensive territory hitherto held by a people whose difference of religion, language, and general habits made them not only incapable of assimilating with their Christian neighbours but almost their natural enemies. By the new conquest, moreover, the Spaniards gained a large extent of country possessing the highest capacities for production in its soil, climate, and state of cultivation. Its shores afforded every facility for commerce. The scattered fragments of the ancient Visigothic empire were now again, with the exception of the little state of Navarre, combined into one great monarchy. Christian Spain gradually rose by means of her new acquisitions from a subordinate situation to the level of a first-rate European power.

The moral influence of the Moorish war, its influence on the Spanish character, was highly important. The war of Granada subjected all the various sections of the country to one common action under the influence of common motives of the most exciting interest. It brought them in conflict with a race, the extreme repugnance of whose institutions and character to their own, served greatly to nourish national sentiment. In this way the spark of patriotism was kindled throughout the whole nation, and the most distant provinces of the Peninsula were knit together.

The consequences of these wars in a military aspect are also worthy of notice. In the war of Granada masses of men were brought together, far greater than had hitherto been known in modern warfare. They were kept in the field not only through long campaigns but far into the winter, a thing altogether unprecedented. They were made to act in concert, and the numerous petty chiefs brought in complete subjection to one common head whose personal character enforced the authority of station. Lastly, they were supplied with all the requisite munitions through the providence of Isabella who introduced into the service the most skilful engineers from other countries and kept in pay bodies of mercenaries, as the Swiss for example, reputed the best disciplined troops of that day. In this admirable school the Spanish soldier was gradually trained to patient endurance, fortitude, and thorough subordination, and those celebrated captains were formed, with that invincible infantry, which in the beginning of the sixteenth century spread the military fame of their country over all Christendom.

CHAPTER XIV

APPLICATION OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AT THE SPANISH COURT

1492

WHILE Ferdinand and Isabella were at Santa Fe, the capitulation was signed that opened the way to an empire compared with which their recent conquests and their present dominions were insignificant. The extraordinary intellectual activity of the Europeans in the fifteenth century carried them forward to high advancement in almost every department of science, but especially nautical, whose surprising results have acquired for the age the glory of maritime discovery. The two nations of Castile and Portugal were naturally led to turn their eyes on the great ocean which washed their western borders.

Maritime enterprise was greatly facilitated by the invention of the astrolabe and the important discovery of the polarity of the magnet. The Portuguese were the first to enter on the brilliant path of nautical discovery, which they pursued under the infant Don Henry. At length, in 1486, they descried the lofty promontory which terminates Africa on the south, which received the cheering appellation of the Cape of Good Hope.

The Spaniards, meanwhile, did not languish in maritime enterprise. Adventurers from the provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa, in 1393, had made themselves masters of one of the smallest of the groups of islands, the Canaries. From the commencement of their reign, Ferdinand and Isabella had shown an earnest solicitude for the encouragement of commerce and nautical science. Misunderstanding gradually arose between the subjects of Castile and Portugal in relation to their respective rights of discovery and commerce on the African coast, which promised a collision between the two crowns, but which was happily adjusted by an article in the treaty of 1479 that terminated the war of the succession. By this it was settled that the right of traffic and of discovery on the western coast of Africa should be exclusively reserved to the Portuguese, who in their turn should resign all claims on the Canaries to the crown of Castile. The Spaniards, thus excluded from further progress to the south, seemed to have no other opening left for naval adventure than the hitherto untravelled regions of the great western ocean. Fortunately, at this juncture, an individual appeared among them, in the person of Christopher Columbus, endowed with capacity for stimulating them to this heroic enterprise.

This extraordinary man was a native of Genoa, of humble parentage. At the age of fourteen, he engaged in a seafaring life, which he followed with little intermission till 1470, when, probably little more than thirty years of age, he landed in Portugal. He continued to make voyages to the then known parts of the world, and when on shore, occupied himself with the construction and sale of charts and maps. His geographical researches were considerably aided by the possession of papers belonging to an eminent Portuguese navigator, a deceased relative of his wife. Stored with nautical science and fortified by experience the reflecting mind of Columbus was naturally led to speculate, and he conceived the possibility of reaching the eastern shores of Asia by a more direct route.

The existence of land beyond the Atlantic, which was not discredited by some of the more enlightened ancients, had become matter of common speculation at the close of the fifteenth century. Columbus's hypothesis rested on much higher ground than mere popular belief. What was credulity with the vulgar and speculation with the learned, amounted in his mind to a settled practical conviction. He was fortified still further in his conclusions by a correspondence with the learned Italian Toscanelli, who furnished him with a map of his own projection.

Columbus submitted the theory on which he had founded his belief in the existence of a western route to King John the Second of Portugal. After a long and fruitless negotiation, and a dishonorable attempt on the part of the Portuguese to avail themselves clandestinely of his information, he quitted Lisbon in disgust, determined to submit his proposals to the Spanish sovereigns.

The period of his arrival in Spain, being the latter part of 1484, would seem to have been the most unpropitious possible to his design. The nation was then in the heat of the Moorish war. The large expenditure incident to this exhausted all resources. Columbus, moreover, was unfortunate in his first channel of communication with the court. He was furnished by Fray Juan Pérez de Marchena, guardian of the convent of La Rábida in Andalusia, who had early taken a deep interest in his plans, with an introduction to Fernando de Talavera, prior of Prado and confessor of the queen. Talavera was so far from comprehending the vast conceptions of Columbus that he seems to have regarded him as a mere visionary, and his hypothesis as involving principles not altogether orthodox. Ferdinand and Isabella, desirous of obtaining the opinion of the most competent judges on the merits of Columbus's theory, referred him to a council selected by Talavera from the most eminent scholars of the kingdom, chiefly ecclesiastics. Such was the apathy exhibited by this learned conclave, and so numerous the impediments suggested by dulness, prejudice, or skepticism, that years glided away before it came to a decision. During this time Columbus appears to have remained in attendance on the court, bearing arms occasionally in the campaigns.

At length, however, Columbus, wearied by procrastination, pressed the court for a definite answer to his propositions. He was informed that the council of Salamanca pronounced his scheme to be 'vain, impracticable, and resting on grounds too weak to merit the support of the government'. Many of the council, however, were too enlightened to acquiesce in this sentence of the majority. The authority of these individuals had undoubtedly great weight with the sovereigns, who softened the verdict by an assurance to Columbus that 'although they were too much occupied at present to embark in his undertaking, yet, at the conclusion of the war, they should find both time and inclination to treat with him'.

He now made application, it would seem, to the dukes of Medina Sidonia and Medina Celi; but neither of these nobles, whose large estates lying along the sea-shore had often invited them to maritime adventure, was disposed to assume one which seemed too hazardous for the resources of the crown. Without wasting time in further solicitation, Columbus prepared to carry his proposals to the king of France, from whom he had received a letter of encouragement while detained in Andalusia.

His progress, however, was arrested at the convent of La Rábida, which he visited previous to his departure, by his friend the guardian, who prevailed on him to postpone his journey till another effort had been made to move the Spanish court in his favour. For this purpose the worthy ecclesiastic undertook an expedition in person to the newly erected city of Santa Fe, where the sovereigns lay encamped before Granada. Juan Pérez had formerly been confessor of Isabella and was held in great consideration by her for his excellent qualities. On arriving at the camp, he was readily admitted to an audience. He pressed the suit of Columbus with all the earnestness and reasoning of which he was capable. The friar's eloquence was supported by that of several eminent persons, whom Columbus during his long residence in the country had interested in his project.

Their representations, combined with the opportune season of the application, occurring at the moment when the approaching termination of the Moorish war allowed room for interest in other objects, wrought so favourable a change in the dispositions of the sovereigns that they consented to resume negotiation with Columbus. An invitation was accordingly sent to him to repair to Santa Fe, and a considerable sum provided for his suitable equipment and his expenses on the road.

Columbus, who lost no time, arrived at the camp in season to witness the surrender of Granada. At his interview with the king and queen, he once more exhibited the arguments on which his hypothesis was founded. He then endeavoured to stimulate the cupidity of his audience by picturing the realms of Mangi and Cathay, which he confidently expected to reach by this western route. He concluded by holding out the prospect of extending the empire of the Cross over nations of benighted heathen. He proposed to devote the profits of his enterprise to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. This last ebullition, which might well have passed for fanaticism in a later day, and given a visionary tinge to his whole project, was not quite so preposterous in an age in which the spirit of the crusades might be said still to linger.

Amidst propitious demonstrations towards Columbus, an obstacle arose in the nature of his demands, which stipulated for himself and heirs the title and authority of Admiral and Viceroy over all lands discovered by him, with one-tenth of the profits. This was deemed wholly inadmissible. Columbus, however, steadily resisted every attempt to induce him to modify his propositions. On this ground the conferences were abruptly broken off, and he once more turned his back upon the Spanish court.

The misunderstanding was not of long duration. Columbus's friends remonstrated with the queen. She contemplated the proposals of Columbus in their true light and, refusing to hearken any longer to the suggestions of cold and timid counsellors, gave way to the natural impulses of her own noble and generous heart. 'I will assume the undertaking,' said she, 'for my my own crown of Castile.'

Columbus, overtaken by the royal messenger a few leagues from Granada, experienced the most courteous reception on his return to Santa Fe, where a definitive arrangement was concluded with the Spanish sovereigns, April 17, 1492. By the terms of the capitulation Ferdinand and Isabella constituted Christopher Columbus their admiral, viceroy, and governor-general of all such islands and continents as he should discover in the western ocean. He was to be vested with exclusive right of jurisdiction over all commercial transactions within his admiralty. He was to be entitled to one-tenth of all the products and profits within the limits of his discoveries, and an additional eighth, provided he should contribute one-eighth part of the expense. By a subsequent ordinance the official dignities above enumerated were settled on him and his heirs for ever, with the privilege of prefixing the title of Don to their names, which had not then degenerated into an appellation of mere courtesy.

No sooner were the arrangements completed than Isabella prepared with her characteristic promptness to forward the expedition by the most efficient measures. Orders were sent to Seville and the other ports of Andalusia to furnish stores and other articles requisite for the voyage, free of duty, and at as low rates as possible. The fleet of three vessels was to sail from the little port of Palos in Andalusia, which had been condemned for some delinquency to maintain two caravels for a twelvemonth for the public service. The third vessel was furnished by the admiral, aided, as it would seem, in defraying the charges, by his friend the guardian of La Rábida, and the Pinzóns, a family in Palos long distinguished for its enterprise among the mariners of that active community. With their assistance Columbus was enabled to surmount the disinclination, and indeed open opposition, manifested by the Andalusian mariners to his perilous voyage. In less than three months his little squadron was equipped for sea. Evidence of the extreme unpopularity of the expedition is afforded by a royal ordinance of April 30th, promising protection to all persons who should embark in it from criminal prosecution of whatever kind until two months after their return. The armament consisted of two caravels, or light vessels without decks, and a third of larger burden. The total number of persons who embarked amounted to one hundred and twenty. The whole charges of the crown for the expedition did not exceed seventeen thousand florins. On the morning of August 3, 1492, the intrepid navigator, bidding adieu to the old world, launched forth on that unfathomed waste of waters where no sail had been ever spread before.

CHAPTER XV

EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM SPAIN

1492

WHILE the Spanish sovereigns were detained before Granada, they published their memorable and most disastrous edict against the Jews. The envy raised by their prosperity, combined with the high religious excitement kindled in the long war with the infidel, directed the terrible arm of the Inquisition, as has been already stated, against this unfortunate people. But the result showed the failure of the experiment, since comparatively few conversions, and those frequently of a suspicious character, were effected.

Under these circumstances the popular odium, inflamed by the discontent of the clergy at the resistance which they encountered in the work of proselytism, gradually grew stronger and stronger against the unhappy Israelites. No rumour was too absurd for the easy credulity of the people.

The inquisitors, in particular, to whom the work of conversion had been specially intrusted, represented the incompetence of all lenient measures to the end proposed. They asserted that the only mode left for the extirpation of the Jewish heresy was to eradicate the seed; and they boldly demanded the immediate and total banishment of every unbaptized Israelite from the land.

Neither Ferdinand nor Isabella, left to the unbiassed dictates of their own reason, could have sanctioned for a moment so impolitic a measure, which involved the loss of the most industrious and skilful portion of their subjects. Its extreme injustice and cruelty rendered it especially repugnant to the naturally humane disposition of the queen. But she had been early schooled to distrust her own reason, and indeed the natural suggestions of humanity, in cases of conscience. Among the reverend counsellors on whom she most relied in these matters was the Dominican Torquemada. Without resistance to the representations, Isabella silenced her own scruples and consented to the fatal measure of proscription.

The edict for the expulsion of the Jews was signed by the Spanish sovereigns at Granada, March 30, 1492. It decrees that all unbaptized Jews, of whatever sex, age, or condition, should depart from the realm by the end of July next ensuing, prohibiting them from revisiting it, on any pretext whatever, under penalty of death and confiscation of property. It was, moreover, interdicted to every subject, to harbour, succour, or minister to the necessities of any Jew, after the expiration of the term limited for his departure.

The doom of exile fell like a thunderbolt on the heads of the Israelites. As they were excluded from the use of gold and silver, the only medium for representing their property was bills of exchange. But commerce was too limited to allow of these being promptly obtained to any very considerable, much less to the enormous amount required in the present instance. It was impossible, moreover, to negotiate a sale of their effects under existing circumstances, since the market was soon glutted with commodities. A chronicler of the day mentions that he had seen a house exchanged for an ass, and a vineyard for a suit of clothes! In Aragon matters were still worse. The government there discovered that the Jews were largely indebted to individuals and to certain corporations. It accordingly caused their property to be sequestrated for the benefit of their creditors, until their debts should be liquidated.

While the gloomy aspect of their fortunes pressed heavily on the Israelites, the Spanish clergy were indefatigable in the work of conversion. They lectured in the synagogues and public squares, expounding the doctrines of Christianity, and thundering forth both argument and invective against the Hebrew heresy. But there were found but very few, when the day of departure arrived, who were not prepared to abandon their country rather than their religion.

When the period of departure arrived, all the principal routes through the country might be seen swarming with emigrants, old and young, sick and helpless, men, women, and children, some mounted on horses or mules, but the greater part on foot. Much the largest division, amounting according to some estimates to eighty thousand souls, passed into Portugal, whose monarch, John the Second, dispensed with his scruples of conscience so far as to give them a free passage through his dominions on their way to Africa, in consideration of a tax of a *cruzado* a head.

A considerable number found their way to the ports of Santa María and Cádiz, where they embarked on board a Spanish fleet for the Barbary coast.

Many emigrants took the direction of Italy. Those who landed at

Naples brought with them an infectious disorder. The disorder was so malignant, and spread with such frightful celerity, as to sweep off more than twenty thousand inhabitants of the city, in the course of the year, whence it extended over the whole Italian peninsula.

Many of the exiles passed into Turkey and to different parts of the Levant, where their descendants continued to speak the Castilian language far into the following century. Others found their way to France, and even England. The modern Jew still reverts with fond partiality to Spain as the cherished land of his fathers, illustrated by the most glorious recollections in their eventful history.

The whole number of Jews expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella is variously computed from one hundred and sixty thousand to eight hundred thousand souls. A view of all the circumstances lead us to adopt the more moderate computation.

The detriment incurred by the state, however, is not founded so much on any numerical estimate as on the subtraction of the mechanical skill, intelligence, and general resources of an orderly, industrious population.

The expulsion of so numerous a class of subjects by an independent act of the sovereign might well be regarded as an enormous stretch of prerogative, altogether incompatible with anything like a free government. But to judge the matter rightly, we must take into view the actual position of the Jews at that time. Far from forming an integral part of the commonwealth, they were regarded as alien to it. Far from being protected by the laws, the only aim of the laws in reference to them was to define more precisely their civil incapacities and to draw the line of division more broadly between them and the Christians. In these circumstances it seemed to be no great assumption of authority to pronounce sentence of exile against those whom public opinion had so long proscribed as enemies to the state.

We need look no further for the principle of action in this case, than the spirit of religious bigotry which led to a similar expulsion of the Jews from England, France, and other parts of Europe, as well as from Portugal, under circumstances of peculiar atrocity a few years later. Spain at this period surpassed most of the nations of Christendom in religious enthusiasm, or to speak more correctly, in bigotry. This is doubtless imputable to the long war with the Moslems and its recent glorious issue, which swelled every heart with exultation, disposing it to consummate the triumphs of the Cross by purging the land from a heresy which, strange as it may seem, was scarcely less detested than that of Mahomet. Both the sovereigns partook largely of these feelings. With regard to Isabella, moreover, it must be borne constantly in mind that she had been used to surrender her own judgment in matters of conscience to those spiritual guardians who were supposed in that age to be its rightful depositaries. Isabella's pious disposition and her trembling solicitude to discharge her duty, at whatever cost of personal inclination, greatly enforced the precepts of education. In this way her very virtues became the source of her errors.

CHAPTER XVI

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF FERDINAND—RETURN AND SECOND VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

1492–1493

TOWARDS the latter end of May, 1492, the Spanish sovereigns quitted Granada, between which and Santa Fe they had divided their time since the surrender of the Moorish metropolis. They were occupied during the two following months with the affairs of Castile. In August they visited Aragon, proposing to establish their winter residence there in order to provide for its internal administration and conclude the negotiations for the final surrender of Roussillon and Cerdagne by France.

Ferdinand and Isabella arrived in Aragon on August 8th, accompanied by Prince John and the infantas, and a brilliant train of Castilian nobles. In their progress through the country they were everywhere received with the most lively enthusiasm. After devoting some months to the internal police of the kingdom, the court transferred its residence to Catalonia, whose capital it reached about the middle of October. During its detention in this place, Ferdinand's career was wellnigh brought to an untimely close.

It was a good old custom of Catalonia for the monarch to preside in the tribunals of justice, at least once a week, for the purpose of determining the suits of the poorer classes especially, who could not afford the more expensive forms of litigation. King Ferdinand, in conformity with this usage, held a court in the house of deputation, on December 7th. As the party was issuing from a little chapel contiguous to the royal saloon, and just as the king was descending a flight of stairs, a ruffian darted from an obscure recess in which he had concealed himself early in the morning and aimed a blow with a short sword, or knife, at the back of Ferdinand's neck. Fortunately the edge of the weapon was turned by a gold chain or collar which he was in the habit of wearing. It inflicted, however, a deep wound between the shoulders.

The report of the catastrophe spread like wildfire through the city. All classes were thrown into consternation by so foul an act, which seemed to cast a stain on the honour and good faith of the Catalans.

The populace assembled in great numbers round the palace where the king lay. All feelings of hostility had long since given way to devoted loyalty towards a government which had uniformly respected the liberties of its subjects, and whose paternal sway had secured similar blessings to Barcelona with the rest of the empire.

The king's wound, which did not appear dangerous at first, gradually exhibited more alarming symptoms. One of the bones was found to be fractured, and a part of it was removed by the surgeons. At length his excellent constitution enabled him so far to recover that in less than three weeks he was able to show himself to the eyes of his anxious subjects.

The author of the crime proved to be a peasant about sixty years of age. The man appeared to be insane. The king would have discharged him, but the Catalans, indignant at the reproach which such a crime seemed to attach to their own honour, condemned the unhappy wretch to the dreadful doom of a traitor.

In the spring of 1493, while the court was still at Barcelona, letters were received from Christopher Columbus, announcing his return to Spain. The great navigator had succeeded, as is well known, in descrying land on Friday, October 12, 1492. After some months spent in exploring the regions, he embarked in January, 1493, for Spain. One of his vessels had previously foundered, and another had deserted him, so that he was left alone to retrace his course across the Atlantic. After a most tempestuous voyage, he was compelled to take shelter in the Tagus. He experienced, however, the most honourable reception from the Portuguese monarch, John the Second. After a brief delay, the admiral resumed his voyage and entered the harbour of Palos on March 15, 1493, being exactly seven months and eleven days since his departure from that port.

The admiral was too desirous of presenting himself before the sovereigns to protract his stay long at Palos. He took with him specimens of the products of the newly discovered regions. He was accompanied by several of the native islanders, arrayed in their simple costume, and decorated, as he passed through the principal cities, with collars, bracelets, and other ornaments of gold, rudely fashioned. He exhibited also considerable quantities of the same metal in dust or in crude masses, numerous vegetable exotics, possessed of aromatic or medicinal virtue, and several kinds of quadrupeds unknown in Europe, and birds whose gaudy plumage gave a brilliant effect to the pageant.

It was the middle of April before Columbus reached Barcelona. The nobility and cavaliers in attendance on the court, together with the authorities of the city, came to the gates to receive him, and escorted him to the royal presence. Ferdinand and Isabella were seated, with their son Prince John, under a superb canopy of state, awaiting his arrival. On his approach, they rose from their seats, and extending their hands to him to salute, caused him to be seated before them. It was, indeed, the proudest moment in the life of Columbus. He had fully established the truth of his long-contested theory, in the face of argument, sophistry, sneer, scepticism, and contempt. The honours paid him, which had hitherto been reserved only for rank, or fortune, or military success, were, in his case, a homage to intellectual power.

After a brief interval the sovereigns requested from Columbus a recital of his adventures. He enumerated the several islands which he had visited, expatiated on the temperate character of the climate, and the capacity of the soil for every variety of agricultural production. He dwelt more on the precious metals to be found in these islands. Lastly, he pointed out the wide scope afforded to Christian zeal in the illumination of a race prepared by their extreme simplicity for the reception of pure and uncorrupted doctrine. When Columbus ceased, all present prostrated themselves on their knees in grateful thanksgivings, while the solemn strains of the Te Deum were poured forth by the choir of the royal chapel, as in commemoration of some glorious victory.

The discoveries of Columbus excited a sensation, particularly among men of science. Most of the scholars of the day, however, adopted the erroneous hypothesis of Columbus, who considered the lands he discovered as bordering on the eastern shores of Asia. From this misapprehension the new dominions soon came to be distinguished as the Indies.

Columbus, during his residence at Barcelona, continued to receive from the Spanish sovereigns the most honourable distinctions which royal bounty could confer. But the attentions most grateful to his lofty spirit were the preparations of the Spanish court for prosecuting his discoveries on a scale commensurate with their importance. A board was established for the direction of Indian affairs, consisting of a superintendent and two subordinate functionaries. The first of these officers was Juan de Fonseca, archdeacon of Seville, an active, ambitious prelate, subsequently raised to high episcopal preferment, whose shrewdness, and capacity for business, enabled him to maintain the control of the Indian department during the whole of the present reign. An office for the transaction of business was instituted at Seville, and a custom-house placed under its direction at

Cádiz. This was the origin of the important establishment of the *Casa de la Contratación de las Indias*, or India House.

The commercial regulations adopted exhibit a narrow policy in some of their features, for which a justification may be found in the spirit of the age. The new territories, far from being permitted free intercourse with foreign nations, were opened only under strict limitations to Spanish subjects. All persons were interdicted, under the severest penalties, from trading with, or even visiting the Indies, without license from the constituted authorities. It was impossible to evade this, as a minute specification of the ships, cargoes, crews, with the property appertaining to each individual, was required to be taken at the office in Cádiz, and a corresponding registration in a similar office established at Hispaniola. Grain, plants, the seeds of numerous vegetable products, which in the genial climate of the Indies might be made valuable articles for domestic consumption or export, were liberally furnished. Commodities of every description for the supply of the fleet were exempted from duty.

Artisans of every sort, provided with the implements of their various crafts, including a great number of miners, were enrolled in the expedition. In order to defray the heavy charges, the government, in addition to the regular resources, had recourse to a loan, and to the sequestrated property of the exiled Jews.

The Spanish sovereigns did not forget the spiritual interests of their new subjects. The Indians who accompanied Columbus to Barcelona had been all of them baptized. One of the Indians remained attached to the prince's establishment, the residue were sent to Seville, whence, after suitable religious instruction, they were to be returned as missionaries for the propagation of the faith among their own countrymen. Twelve Spanish ecclesiastics were also destined to this service, among whom was the celebrated Las Casas so conspicuous afterwards for his benevolent exertions in behalf of the unfortunate natives. The most explicit directions were given to the admiral to use every effort for the illumination of the poor heathen, which was set forth as the primary object of the expedition.

Soon after Columbus's return to Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella applied to the court of Rome to confirm them in the possession of their recent discoveries and invest them with similar extent of jurisdiction with that formerly conferred on the kings of Portugal. The pontifical throne was at that time filled by Alexander the Sixth. He made no hesitation in granting what cost him nothing.

On May 3, 1493, he published a bull which, taking into consideration the eminent services of the Spanish monarchs in the cause of the church, especially in the subversion of the Mahometan empire in Spain, confirmed them in the possession of all lands discovered or hereafter to be discovered by them in the western ocean.

This bull he supported by another, dated on the following day, in which the pope, in order to obviate any misunderstanding with the Portuguese, and acting no doubt on the suggestion of the Spanish sovereigns, defined with greater precision the intention of his original grant to the latter, by bestowing on them all such lands as they should discover to the west and south of an imaginary line to be drawn from pole to pole at the distance of one hundred leagues to the west of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands. A third bull, issued September 25th of the same year, invested the sovereigns with plenary authority over all countries discovered by them, whether in the east or within the boundaries of India, all previous concessions to the contrary notwithstanding.

The court of Lisbon viewed with secret disquietude the increasing maritime enterprise of its neighbours. John the Second, a politic and ambitious prince, sought some pretence to check the career of discovery, or at least to share in the spoils of it.

John soon despatched an ambassador to Barcelona, who, after dwelling on some irrelevant topics, touched the late voyage of discovery. In the meanwhile, Ferdinand and Isabella received intelligence that King John was equipping a considerable armament in order to anticipate or defeat their discoveries in the west. They instantly sent one of their household, Don Lope de Herrera, as ambassador to Lisbon.

While this game of diplomacy was going on, the Castilian court availed itself of the interval to expedite preparations for the second voyage of discovery. The complement of the fleet, originally fixed at twelve hundred souls, was eventually swelled to fifteen hundred. The squadron amounted to seventeen vessels. Columbus, dropping down the Guadalquivir, took his departure from the bay of Cádiz, on September 25, 1493.

No sooner had the fleet weighed anchor than Ferdinand and Isabella despatched an embassy in solemn state to advise the king of Portugal of it. This embassy argued that the grants of the Holy See, and the treaty with Spain in 1479, had reference merely to the actual possessions of Portugal, and the right of discovery by an eastern route along the coasts of Africa to the Indies; that these rights had been invariably respected by Spain; that the late voyage of Columbus struck into a directly opposite trace; and that the several bulls of Pope Alexander the Sixth, prescribing the line of partition not from east to west, but from the north to the south pole, were intended to secure to the Spaniards the exclusive right of discovery in the western ocean. The ambassadors concluded with offering, in the name of their sovereigns, to refer the whole matter in dispute to the arbitration of the court of Rome, or of any common umpire.

King John was deeply chagrined at learning the departure of the Spanish expedition. John, however, was too shrewd a prince to be drawn into so impolitic a measure as war with a powerful adversary. Neither did he relish the suggestion of deciding the dispute by arbitration. He came to the resolution, at last, of deciding the matter by a fair and open conference.

Commissioners named by the two crowns convened at Tordesillas, and on June 7, 1494, subscribed articles of agreement. In this treaty the Spaniards were secured in the exclusive right of navigation and discovery in the western ocean. At the urgent remonstrance of the Portuguese, however, who complained that the papal line of demarcation cooped up their enterprises within too narrow limits, they consented that, instead of one hundred, it should be removed three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, beyond which all discoveries should appertain to the Spanish nation. The removal of the partition line was followed by important consequences to the Portuguese, who derived from it their pretensions to Brazil.

CHAPTER XVII

CASTILIAN LITERATURE—CULTIVATION OF THE COURT—CLASSICAL LEARNING—SCIENCE

WE have now to show the intellectual culture of the nation. This constitutes, in its broadest sense, a principal end of all government. The present and the following chapter embrace the mental progress of the kingdom through the whole of Isabella's reign.

The first years of Ferdinand and Isabella's government were too clouded by civil dissensions to afford a cheering prospect. Ferdinand's early education, moreover, had been greatly neglected. His boyhood was spent among soldiers, in camps instead of schools, and the wisdom which he so eminently displayed in later life was drawn far more from his own resources than from books.

Isabella was reared under more favourable auspices, at least more favourable to mental culture. She was allowed to pass her youth in retirement, and indeed oblivion, as far as the world was concerned, under her mother's care, at Arévalo. In this modest seclusion she had full leisure to indulge the habits of study and reflection to which her temper naturally disposed her. She was acquainted with several modern languages, and both wrote and discoursed in her own with great precision and elegance. No great expense or solicitude, however, appeared to have been lavished on her education. She was uninstructed in the Latin, which in that day was of great importance.

Isabella resolved to repair the defects of education by devoting herself to the acquisition of the Latin tongue so soon as the distracting wars with Portugal, which attended her accession, were terminated. In less than a year 'her admirable genius enabled her to obtain a good knowledge of the Latin language'. Isabella inherited the taste of her father, John the Second, for the collecting of books.

The queen manifested the most earnest solicitude for the instruction of her own children. The most competent masters, native and foreign, especially from Italy, were employed in their tuition. Under these masters the infantas made attainments rarely permitted to the sex.

A still deeper anxiety was shown in the education of her only son, Prince John, heir of the united Spanish monarchies. Every precaution was taken to train him up in a manner that might tend to the formation of the character suited to his exalted station. He was placed in a class consisting of ten youths, selected from the sons of the principal nobility.

A mimic council was also formed on the model of a council of state, composed of suitable persons of more advanced standing, whose province it was to deliberate on and to discuss topics connected with government and public policy. Over this body the prince presided. Here he was initiated into a practical acquaintance with the important duties which were to devolve on him. He devoted many of his leisure hours to music, for which he had a fine natural taste, and in which he attained sufficient proficiency to perform with skill on a variety of instruments. In short, his education was happily designed to produce that combination of mental and moral excellence which should fit him for reigning over his subjects with benevolence and wisdom.

Next to her family, there was no object which the queen had so much at heart as the improvement of the young nobility. She requested the learned Peter Martyr to repair to the court and open a school there for the instruction of the young nobility.

Another Italian scholar, Lucio Marineo Siculo, co-operated with Martyr in the introduction of a more liberal scholarship among the Castilian nobles. He, induced to visit Spain, in 1486, soon took his place among the professors of Salamanca, where he filled the chairs of poetry and grammar with great applause for twelve years. He was subsequently transferred to the court, which he helped to illumine by his exposition of the ancient classics, particularly the Latin. Under these and other eminent scholars, both native and foreign, the young nobility of Castile applied with generous ardour to the cultivation of science.

All ages seemed to catch the generous enthusiasm; and the marquis of Denia, although turned of sixty, made amends for the sins of his youth by learning the elements of the Latin tongue at this late period. In short, as Giovio remarks in his eulogium on Lebrija, 'No Spaniard was accounted noble who held science in indifference'. From a very early period a courtly stamp was impressed on the poetic literature of Spain. A similar character was now imparted to its erudition; and men of the most illustrious birth seemed eager to lead the way. In this brilliant exhibition those of the other sex must not be omitted, who contributed by their intellectual endowments to the general illumination of the period.

While the study of the ancient tongues came into fashion with persons of both sexes, and of the highest rank, it was widely and most thoroughly cultivated by professed scholars. Men of letters, some of whom have been already noticed, were invited into Spain from Italy. To this country it was usual also for Spanish students to repair in order to complete their discipline in classical literature.

The most remarkable of the Spanish scholars who made this literary pilgrimage to Italy was Antonio de Lebrija, or Nebrissensis, as he is more frequently called from his Latin name. He was invited to fill the Latin chair at Seville, whence he was successively transferred to Salamanca and Alcalá, which places he long continued to enlighten by his oral instruction and publications. The productions of this indefatigable scholar embrace a large circle of topics, independently of his various treatises on philology and criticism. Some were translated into French and Italian. No man of his own, or of later times contributed more essentially than Lebrija to the introduction of a pure and healthful erudition into Spain.

The Castilian scholars of the close of the fifteenth, and the beginning of the sixteenth century, may take rank with their illustrious contemporaries of Italy. They could not indeed achieve such brilliant results in the discovery of the remains of antiquity, but they were unwearied in their illustrations, both oral and written, of the ancient authors. Their numerous commentaries, translations, dictionaries, grammars, and various works of criticism, many of which, though now obsolete, passed into repeated editions in their own day, bear ample testimony to the generous zeal, with which they conspired to raise their contemporaries to a proper level for contemplating the works of the great masters of antiquity, and well entitled them to the high eulogium of Erasmus, that 'liberal studies were brought, in the course of a few years, in Spain to so flourishing a condition, as might not only excite the admiration, but serve as a model to the most cultivated nations of Europe'.

The Spanish universities were the theatre on which this classical erudition was more especially displayed. Previous to Isabella's reign there were but few schools in the kingdom, not one indeed of any note, except in Salamanca. But under the present government academies of repute were to be found in Seville, Toledo, Salamanca, Granada, and Alcalá; and learned teachers were drawn from abroad by the most liberal emoluments. At the head of these establishments stood Salamanca. Such was its reputation that foreigners as well as natives were attracted to its schools. At one time seven thousand students were assembled within its walls. Professorships in every department of science then studied, as well as of polite letters, were established at the university, the 'new Athens', as Martyr somewhere styles it. Before the close of Isabella's reign, however, its glories were rivalled, if not eclipsed, by those of Alcalá.

Theological science, in particular, received a large share of attention. The highest stations in the church were reserved for those who combined the highest intellectual endowments with unblemished piety. Theological studies were pursued with ardour, the Scriptures copiously illustrated, and sacred eloquence cultivated with success.

A similar impulse was felt in other walks. Jurisprudence assumed a new aspect, under the learned labours of Montalvo. Mathematics formed a principal branch of education and were successfully applied to astronomy and geography. Valuable treatises were produced on medicine and on the more familiar practical arts, as husbandry, for example. History, which since the time of Alfonso the Tenth, had been held in higher honour and more widely cultivated in Castile than in any other European state, began to lay aside the garb of chronicle, and to be studied on more scientific principles. Charters and diplomas were consulted, manuscripts collated, coins and lapidary inscriptions deciphered, and collections made of these materials, the true basis of authentic history. An office of public archives, like that now existing at Simancas, was established at Burgos.

Nothing could have been more opportune for the enlightened purposes of Isabella than the introduction of the art of printing into Spain at the commencement, indeed in the very first year, of her reign. She encouraged its establishment by large privileges to those who exercised it, whether natives or foreigners, and by causing many of the works composed by her subjects to be printed at her own charge.

Monopolies for printing and selling books for a limited period, answering to the modern copyright, were granted to certain persons in consideration of their doing so at a reasonable rate. It seems to have been usual for the printers to be also the publishers and vendors of books. Foreign books of every description, by a law of 1480, were allowed to be imported into the kingdom free of all duty whatever.

The first press appears to have been erected at Valencia, in 1474. Through the liberal patronage of the government, and, before the end of the fifteenth century, presses were established and in active operation in the principal cities of the united kingdom.

By an ordinance, dated at Toledo, July 8, 1502, it was decreed that 'as many of the books sold in the kingdom were defective, or false, or apocryphal, or pregnant with vain and superstitious novelties, it was therefore ordered that no book should hereafter be printed without special license from the king, or some person regularly commissioned by him for the purpose'. The names of the commissioners then follow, consisting mostly of ecclesiastics, archbishops and bishops, with authority respectively over their several dioceses. The immediate agents employed in the examination were also drawn from the Inquisition, who exercised this important trust in a manner most fatal to the interests of letters and humanity.

While endeavouring to do justice to the progress of civilization in this reign, less emphasis should be laid on any actual results than on the spirit of improvement which they imply in the nation, and the liberal dispositions of the government. The fifteenth century was distinguished by a zeal for research and laborious acquisition, especially in ancient literature, throughout Europe, which showed itself in Italy in the beginning of the age, and in Spain, and some other countries, towards the close.

In the sciences their success was more equivocal. A blind reverence for authority, a habit of speculation, instead of experiment, so pernicious in physics, in short an ignorance of the true principles of philosophy, often led the scholars of that day in a wrong direction. Unfortunately for Spain, it is certain that in general intellectual fermentation no period has surpassed, if it can be said to have rivalled, the age of Isabella.

CHAPTER XVIII

CASTILIAN LITERATURE—ROMANCES OF CHIVALRY—LYRICAL POETRY—THE DRAMA

ORNAMENTAL or polite literature, which, emanating from the taste and sensibility of a nation, readily exhibits its various fluctuations of fashion and feeling, was stamped in Spain with the distinguishing characteristics of this revolutionary age. The poetry of Castile, which throughout the present reign continued to breathe the same patriotic spirit, and to exhibit the same national peculiarities that had distinguished it from the time of the Cid, submitted soon after Ferdinand's death to the influence of the more polished Tuscan, and henceforth, losing somewhat of its distinctive physiognomy, assumed many of the prevalent features of continental literature. Thus the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella becomes an epoch as memorable in literary, as in civil history.

The most copious vein of fancy was turned in the direction of the prose romance of chivalry. The circumstances of the age naturally led to its production. The romantic Moorish wars—the stirring adventures by sea as well as land—above all, the discovery of a world beyond the waters gave full scope to the play of the imagination.

The publication of *Amadis de Gaula* gave a decided impulse to this popular feeling. The simple beauties of this fine old romance, its bustling incidents, its general truth of portraiture, above all, the knightly character of the hero, soon recommended it to popular favour and imitation. A continuation, bearing the title of *Las Sergas de Esplandian*, was given to the world, and grafted on the original stock, as the fifth book of the Amadis, before 1510. A sixth, containing the adventures of his nephew, was printed at Salamanca in the course of the last-mentioned year; and thus the idle writers of the day continued to propagate dullness until the much abused public would no longer suffer the name of Amadis to cloak the manifold sins of his posterity.

These romances of chivalry must have undoubtedly contributed to nourish those exaggerated sentiments which from a very early period entered into the Spanish character. It is remarkable that the chivalrous romance, which was so copiously cultivated through the greater part of the sixteenth century, should not have assumed the poetic form, as in Italy, and indeed among our Norman ancestors; and that, in its prose dress, no name of note appears to raise it to a high degree of literary merit.

The most popular poetry of this period is the ballads, or *romances*, as they were termed in Spain. Familiar to the Peninsula as far back as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they received a fresh impulse from the war with Granada, and may perhaps be regarded, without too high praise, as the most exquisite popular minstrelsy of any age or country.

There is considerable resemblance between the early Spanish ballad and the British. The former are in general of a more sustained and chivalrous character, less gloomy, and although fierce not so ferocious, nor so decidedly tragical in their aspect as the latter. The ballads of the Cid, however, have many points in common with the border poetry.

The resemblance between the minstrelsy of the two countries vanishes, however, as we approach the Moorish ballads. They are brief, seizing single situations of the highest poetic interest, and striking the eye of the reader with a brilliancy of execution so artless in appearance withal as to seem rather the effect of accident than study. We are transported to the gay seat of Moorish power, and witness the animating bustle, its pomp and its revelry, prolonged to the last hour of its existence. The bull-fight of the Vivarrambla, the graceful tilt of reeds, the amorous knights with their quaint significant devices, the Moorish maiden radiant at the tourney, the moonlight serenade, the stolen interview, where the lover gives vent to all the intoxication of passion in the burning language of Arabian metaphor and hyperbole—these, and a thousand similar scenes are brought before the eye, by a succession of rapid and animated touches, like the lights and shadows of a landscape. The light trochaic structure of the *redondilla*, as the Spanish ballad measure is called, is admirably suited by its flexibility to the most varied and opposite expression.

Nothing can be more agreeable than the general effect of the Moorish ballads, which combine the elegance of a riper period of literature with the natural sweetness and simplicity, savouring sometimes even of the rudeness of a primitive age. Their merits have raised them to a sort of classical dignity in Spain, and have led to their cultivation by a higher order of writers, and down to a far later period, than in any other country in Europe.

The Moorish *romances* fortunately appeared after the introduction of printing into the Peninsula, so that they were secured a permanent existence, instead of perishing with the breath that made them. The Castilian ballads were first printed in the *Cancionero General* of Fernando del Castillo, in 1511. They have passed into repeated editions, at home and abroad. Ignorance of their authors and of the era of their production has prevented any attempt at exact chronological arrangement.

Cancioneros, or collections of lyrics, were published, embodying the productions of this reign and that of John the Second, thus bringing under one view the poetic culture of the fifteenth century. The earliest cancionero printed was at Saragossa, in 1492. It comprehended the works of Mena, Manrique, and six or seven other bards of less note. A far more copious collection was made by Fernando del Castillo, and first published at Valencia, in 1511, under the title of *Cancionero General.*

The Castilian deepens his verse into a moral tone, and, dwelling on the vicissitudes and vanities of human life, points his reflections with some caustic warning, often conveyed with enchanting simplicity, but without the least approach to lyric exaltation, or indeed the affectation of it. This proneness to moralize the song is in truth a characteristic of the old Spanish bard.

We must not dismiss the miscellaneous poetry of this period without some notice of the 'Coplas' of Don Jorge Manrique on the death of his father, the count of Paredes, in 1474. The elegy is of considerable length, and is sustained throughout in a tone of the highest moral dignity. A tenderness pervades the piece, which may remind us of the best manner of Petrarch.

The sacred plays, of mysteries, so popular throughout Europe in the Middle Ages, may be traced in Spain to an ancient date. The transition from these rude spectacles to more regular dramatic efforts was very slow and gradual.

A memorable production is the tragicomedy of 'Celestina', or 'Calisto and Melibea', as it is frequently called. The story turns on a love intrigue. A Spanish youth of rank is enamoured of a lady whose affections he gains with some difficulty, but whom he finally seduces through the arts of an accomplished courtesan, whom the author has introduced under the romantic name of Celestina. The general plot is exceedingly clumsy, yet it affords many situations of deep and varied interest in its progress. The principal characters are delineated with considerable skill. The part of Celestina, in particular, in which a veil of plausible hypocrisy is thrown over the deepest profligacy of conduct, is managed with much address.

The tragicomedy, as it is styled, of Celestina, was obviously never intended for representation. The length and arrangement of the piece are unsuitable. But, notwithstanding this, and its approximation to the character of a romance, it must be admitted to contain the essential elements of dramatic composition; and, as such, is extolled by the Spanish critics as opening the theatrical career of Europe. It has been translated into most of the European languages.

The drama assumed the pastoral form, in its early stages, in Spain, as in Italy. The oldest specimens in this way, which have come down to us, are the productions of Juan de la Encina. Encina's works first appeared at Salamanca, in 1496.

Encina's eclogues are simple compositions, with little pretence to dramatic artifice. The characters are of the humble class belonging to pastoral life, and the dialogue, which is extremely appropriate, is conducted with facility. There is a comic air imparted to them, however, and a lively colloquial turn, which renders them very agreeable. The simplicity of these productions recommended them to popular imitation, which continued long after the regular forms of the drama were introduced into Spain.

The credit of this introduction belongs to Bartholomeo Torres de Naharro. The scenes of Naharro's comedies, with a single exception, are laid in Spain and Italy. The dialogue, especially in the lower parts, is sustained with much comic vivacity; indeed Naharro seems to have had a nicer perception of character as it is found in lower life, than as it exists in the higher.

Naharro's comedies are not much to be commended for the intrigue, which generally excites but a languid interest, and shows little power or adroitness in the contrivance. With every defect, however, they must be allowed to have given the first forms to Spanish comedy. These comedies, moreover, far from blind conformity with the ancients, discovered much of the spirit of independence, and deviated into many of the eccentricities which distinguish the national theatre in later times.

A similar impulse was given to tragedy. The first that entered on this department were professed scholars who adopted the error of the Italian dramatists in fashioning their pieces servilely after the antique, instead of seizing the expression of their own age. The most conspicuous attempts in this way were made by Fernán Pérez de Oliva.

These classical compositions were confined to the closet, serving only as a relaxation for the man of letters, while the voice of the people compelled all who courted it, to accommodate their inventions to those romantic forms which were subsequently developed in such variety of beauty by the great Spanish dramatists.

We have now surveyed the different kinds of poetic culture familiar to Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella. Their most conspicuous element is the national spirit which pervades them. But the great obstacle may be found in the imperfection of the language and the deficiency of the more exact and finished metrical forms indispensable to high poetic execution. The reign may be regarded as the epoch which divides the ancient from the modern school of Spanish poetry, in which the language was slowly but steadily undergoing the process of refinement which finally gave full scope to the poetic talent that raised the literature of the country to such brilliant heights in the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER XIX

ITALIAN WARS—GENERAL VIEW OF EUROPE—INVASION OF ITALY BY CHARLES VIII OF FRANCE

1493–1495

THE close of the fifteenth century presents, on the whole, the most striking point of view in modern history, one from which we may contemplate the consummation of an important revolution in the structure of political society, and the first application of several inventions destined to exercise the widest influence on human civilization. The feudal institutions, or rather the feudal principle, had gradually fallen into decay, for it had not the power of accommodating itself to the increased demands and improved condition of society. The conviction of this reconciled the nation to the transfer of authority into other hands, into the hands of the sovereign.

In whatever degree public opinion and the progress of events might favour the transition of power from the aristocracy to the monarch, it is obvious that much would depend on his personal character since the advantages of his station alone made him by no means a match for the combined forces of his great nobility. The remarkable adaptation of the characters of the principal sovereigns of Europe to this exigency, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, would seem to have something providential in it. Henry the Seventh of England, Louis the Eleventh of France, Ferdinand of Naples, John the Second of Aragon, and his son Ferdinand, and John the Second of Portugal, however differing in other respects, were all distinguished by a sagacity which enabled them to devise the most subtile and comprehensive schemes of policy, and which was prolific in expedients for the circumvention of enemies too potent to be encountered by open force.

No sooner was the internal organization of the different nations of Europe placed on a secure basis than they found leisure to direct their views to a more distant sphere of action. Their international communication was greatly facilitated by several useful inventions coincident with this period, or then first extensively applied. Such was the art of printing. The establishment of posts came into frequent use in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Lastly, the compass brought the remotest regions into contact. With these facilities, the different European states might be said to be brought into as intimate relation with one another, as the different provinces of the same kingdom were before. They now for the first time regarded each other as members of one great community, in whose action they were all mutually concerned. A greater anxiety was manifested to detect the springs of every political movement of their neighbours. Missions became frequent, and accredited agents were stationed at the different courts. The science of diplomacy began to be studied. Schemes of aggression and resistance, leading to political combinations the most complex and extended, were gradually formed. We are not to imagine, however, the existence of any well-defined ideas of a balance of power at this early period. The object of these combinations was some positive act of aggression or resistance, for purposes of conquest or defence, not for the maintenance of any abstract theory of political equilibrium.

The management of the foreign relations of the nation, at the close of the fifteenth century, was resigned wholly to the sovereign. War was regarded as a game, in which the sovereign parties engaged, not on behalf of their subjects, but exclusively on their own. Like desperate gamblers, they contended for the spoils or the honours of victory. Every device, however paltry, was resorted to; and no advantage was deemed unwarrantable, which could tend to secure the victory. The most profligate maxims of state policy were openly avowed by men of reputed honour and integrity. In short, the diplomacy of that day is very generally characterized by low cunning, subterfuge, and petty trickery.

Italy was, doubtless, the great school where this political morality was taught. That country was broken up into a number of small states, too nearly equal to allow the absolute supremacy of any one. At the same time, it demanded the most restless vigilance on the part of each to maintain its independence against its neighbours. Hence such a complexity of intrigues and combinations as the world had never before witnessed. At the period before us, the principal states of Italy were the republics of Venice and Florence, the duchy of Milan, the papal see, and the kingdom of Naples. The others may be regarded merely as satellites, revolving round some one or other of these superior powers.

Venice may be considered as the most formidable of the great powers, taking into consideration her wealth, her powerful navy, her territory in the north, and princely colonial domain. No government in that age attracted such general admiration, both from natives and foreigners, who seem to have looked upon it as affording the very best model of political wisdom. Yet there was no country where the citizen enjoyed less positive freedom, none whose foreign relations were conducted with more absolute selfishness, and with a more narrow, bargaining spirit, savouring rather of a company of traders than of a great and powerful state. But all this was compensated, in the eyes of her contemporaries, by the stability of her institutions.

The government of Milan was at this time under the direction of Lodovico Sforza, or Lodovico the Moor, as he is commonly called. He held the reins in the name of his nephew, then a minor. His cool, perfidious character was stained with the worst vices of the most profligate class of Italian statesmen of that period.

The central parts of Italy were occupied by the republic of Florence, which had resigned itself to the dominion of the Medici, whose cultivated tastes and munificent patronage shed a splendid illusion over their administration.

The papal chair was filled by Alexander the Sixth, a pontiff whose licentiousness, avarice, and unblushing effrontery have been the theme of unmingled reproach. His preferment was effected by lavish bribery. Although a native Spaniard, his election was extremely unpalatable to Ferdinand and Isabella, who deprecated the scandal it must bring upon the church, and who had little to hope for themselves, in a political view, from the elevation of one of their own subjects even, whose mercenary spirit placed him at the control of the highest bidder.

The Neapolitan sceptre was swayed by Ferdinand the First, whose father, Alfonso the Fifth, the uncle of Ferdinand of Aragon, had obtained the crown by the adoption of Joanna of Naples, or rather by his own good sword. Ferdinand's character, the very opposite of his noble father's, was dark, wily, and ferocious. He was about seventy years of age at the period of which we are treating, 1493. The heir apparent, Alfonso, was equally sanguinary in his temper, though possessing less talent for dissimulation than his father.

Such was the character of the principal Italian courts at the close of the fifteenth century. The politics of the country were necessarily regulated by the temper and views of the leading powers. They were essentially selfish and personal. The ancient republican forms had been gradually effaced during this century, and more arbitrary ones introduced. The name of freedom, indeed, was still inscribed on their banners, but the spirit had disappeared.

But, while no spark of generous patriotism seemed to warm the bosoms of the Italians, the internal condition of the country was eminently prosperous. Italy had far outstripped the rest of Europe in the various arts of civilized life; and she everywhere afforded the evidence of faculties developed by unceasing intellectual action. The face of the country itself was like a garden.

This scene of domestic tranquillity was destined to be changed by that terrible invasion which the ambition of Lodovico Sforza brought upon his country. He had already organized a coalition of the northern powers of Italy, to defeat the interference of the king of Naples in behalf of his grandson, the rightful duke of Milan, whom his uncle held in subjection during a protracted minority, while he exercised all the real functions of sovereignty in his name. Not feeling sufficiently secure from his Italian confederacy, Sforza invited the king of France to revive the hereditary claims of the house of Anjou to the crown of Naples, promising to aid him in the enterprise with all his resources. In this way, this wily politician proposed to divert the storm from his own head, by giving Ferdinand sufficient occupation at home.

The throne of France was at that time filled by Charles the Eighth, a monarch scarcely twenty-two years of age. His father, Louis the Eleventh, had given him an education unbecoming not only a great prince, but even a private gentleman. His favourite studies were the exploits of celebrated conquerors, of Caesar and Charlemagne particularly, which filled his young mind with vague and visionary ideas of glory. These dreams were still further nourished by the tourneys and other chivalrous spectacles of the age, in which he delighted, until he seems to have imagined himself some doughty paladin of romance, destined to the achievement of a grand and perilous enterprise. With a mind thus excited by chimerical visions of military glory, he lent a willing ear to the artful propositions of Sforza.

Nothing could be more unsound than Charles's claims to the crown of Naples. Without discussing the original pretensions of the rival houses of Aragon and Anjou, it is sufficient to state that, at the time of Charles the Eighth's invasion, the Neapolitan throne had been in the possession of the Aragonese family more than half a century, under three successive princes solemnly recognized by the people, sanctioned by repeated investitures of the papal suzerain, and admitted by all the states of Europe. Charles's claim, on the other hand, was derived originally from a testamentary bequest of René, count of Provence, operating to the exclusion of the son of his own daughter, the rightful heir of the house of Anjou. The pretensions of Ferdinand, of Spain, as representative of the legitimate branch of Aragon, were far more plausible.

Charles's position was such as to make the projected expedition impolitic. A misunderstanding had for some time subsisted between him and the Spanish sovereigns, and he was at open war with Germany and England. By the treaties of Etaples and Senlis, he purchased a reconciliation with Henry the Seventh of England, and with Maximilian, the emperor elect, and finally, by that of Barcelona, effected an amicable adjustment of his difficulties with Spain.

This treaty, which involved the restoration of Roussillon and Cerdagne, was of great importance to the crown of Aragon. These provinces, it will be remembered, had been originally mortgaged by Ferdinand's father, King John the Second, to Louis the Eleventh of France. This treaty had long been a principal object of Ferdinand's policy.

The principal articles of the treaty provided that the contracting parties should mutually aid each other against all enemies; that they should reciprocally prefer this alliance to that with any other, *the vicar of Christ excepted*; that the Spanish sovereigns should enter into no understanding with any power, *the vicar of Christ excepted*, prejudicial to the interests of France.

The treaty excited surprise and satisfaction in Spain, where Roussillon was regarded as of the last importance, not merely from the extent of its resources, but from its position, which made it the key of Catalonia.

The preparations of Charles, meanwhile, excited general alarm throughout Italy. Ferdinand, the old king of Naples, who in vain endeavoured to arrest them by negotiation, had died in the beginning of 1494. He was succeeded by his son Alfonso, a prince of bolder but less politic character, and equally odious, from the cruelty of his disposition. He lost no time in putting his kingdom in a posture of defence; but he wanted the best of all defences, the attachment of his subjects. His interests were supported by the Florentine republic and the pope, whose family had intermarried with the royal house of Naples. Venice stood aloof, secure in her remoteness, unwilling to compromise her interests by too precipitate a declaration in favour of either party.

The European powers regarded the expedition of Charles the Eighth with somewhat different feelings. Most of them were not unwilling to see so formidable a prince waste his resources in a remote and chimerical expedition. Ferdinand, however, contemplated with more anxiety an event which might terminate in the subversion of the Neapolitan branch] of his house, and bring a powerful and active neighbour in contact with his own dominions in Sicily. He lost no time in fortifying the faltering courage of the pope by assurances of support. His ambassador, then resident at the papal court, was Garcilasso de la Vega, father of the illustrious poet of that name. He urged the pope to rely on his master, the king of Aragon.

In the meantime, Charles's preparations went forward with the languor and vacillation resulting from divided councils and multiplied embarrassments. The king was very young, weak in person, headstrong in will, surrounded by few discreet counsellors, and wholly destitute of the requisite funds. Charles, in the month of June, despatched an envoy to the Spanish court, requiring Ferdinand's fulfilment of the treaty of Barcelona, by aiding him with men and money and by throwing open his ports in Sicily for the French navy.

Ferdinand saw the time was arrived for coming to an explicit declaration with the French court. He appointed a special mission, in order to do this in the least offensive manner possible. The person selected for this delicate task was Alonso de Silva, brother of the count of Cifuentes.

The ambassador, after seeking in vain a private audience from King Charles, explained to him the purport of his mission in the presence of his courtiers. He assured him of the satisfaction which the king of Aragon had experienced at receiving intelligence of his projected expedition against the infidel. He besought the king not to employ the forces destined to so glorious a purpose against any one of the princes of Europe, but to reflect how great a scandal this must necessarily bring on the Christian cause. Above all, he cautioned him against forming any designs on Naples, since that kingdom was a fief of the church, in whose favour an exception was expressly made by the treaty of Barcelona, which recognized her alliance and protection as paramount to every other obligation. Silva's discourse was responded to by the president of the parliament of Paris in a formal Latin oration, asserting generally Charles's right to Naples. As soon as it was concluded, the king arose and abruptly quitted the apartment.

The clause touching the rights of the church was too frequent in public treaties to excite any particular attention; and he was astounded at the broad ground which it was now made to cover, and which defeated the sole object proposed by the cession of Roussillon. He could not disguise his chagrin and indignation at what he deemed the perfidy of the Spanish court.

The unexpected and menacing attitude assumed by Ferdinand failed, however, to arrest the operations of the French monarch, who, having completed his preparations, left Vienne in August, 1494, and crossed the Alps at the head of the most formidable host which had scaled that mountain barrier since the irruption of the northern barbarians. On his approach to Rome, the pope and the cardinals took refuge in the castle of St Angelo. On December 31st, Charles defiled into the city at the head of his victorious chivalry, if victorious they could be called when they had scarcely broken a lance in the whole of their progress.

The Italians were panic-struck at the aspect of troops so different from their own, and so superior to them in organization, science, and military equipment. Warfare was conducted on peculiar principles in Italy. The business of fighting, in her thriving communities, instead of forming part of the regular profession of a gentleman, as in other countries at this period, was entrusted to the hands of a few soldiers of fortune, *condottieri*, as they were called, who hired themselves out, with the forces under their command, consisting exclusively of heavy-armed cavalry, to whatever state would pay them best. The science of defence was almost exclusively studied. The object seemed to be, not so much the annoyance of the enemy, as self-preservation. The common interests of the *condottieri* being paramount to every obligation towards the state which they served, they easily came to an understanding with one another to spare their troops as much as possible, until at length battles were fought with little more personal hazard than would be incurred in an ordinary tourney. Thus war became disarmed of its terrors. Courage was no longer essential in a soldier, and the Italian, made effeminate, if not timid, was incapable of encountering the adventurous daring and severe discipline of the northern warrior.

The astonishing success of the French was still more imputable to the free use and admirable organization of their infantry, whose strength lay in the Swiss mercenaries. Machiavelli ascribes the misfortunes of his nation chiefly to its exclusive reliance on cavalry.

The Swiss were formed into battalions varying from three to eight thousand men each. They wore little defensive armour, and their principal weapon was the pike, eighteen feet long. Formed into these solid battalions, which, bristling with spears all around, received the technical appellation of the *hedgehog*, they presented an invulnerable front on every quarter. They were too unwieldy, however, for rapid or complicated manoeuvres; they were easily disconcerted by any unforeseen impediment, or irregularity of the ground; and the event proved that the Spanish foot, armed with its short swords and bucklers, by breaking in under the long pikes of its enemy, could succeed in bringing him to close action, where his formidable weapon was of no avail.

In artillery, the French were at this time in advance of the Italians, perhaps of every nation in Europe. The Italians were exceedingly defective in this department. Some of the most competent Italian writers thought it might be dispensed with altogether in field engagements.

The French, on the other hand, were provided with a beautiful train of ordnance, consisting of bronze cannon about eight feet in length, and many smaller pieces. They were lightly mounted, drawn by horses, and easily kept pace with the rapid movements of the army.

The rapid successes of the French spread consternation among the Italian states, who now for the first time seemed to feel the existence of a common interest, and the necessity of efficient concert. Ferdinand was active in promoting these dispositions, through his ministers, Garcilasso de la Vega and Alonso de Silva. The latter had quitted the French court on its entrance into Italy, and withdrawn to Genoa.

The Roman pontiff had lost no time, after the appearance of the French army in Italy, in pressing the Spanish court to fulfil its engagements. He endeavoured to propitiate the goodwill of the sovereigns by several important concessions. He granted to them and their successors the *tercias*, or two-ninths of the tithes, throughout the dominions of Castile. He caused bulls of crusade to be promulgated throughout Spain, granting at the same time a tenth of the ecclesiastical rents, with the understanding that the proceeds should be devoted to the protection of the Holy See. Towards the close of this year, 1494, or the beginning of the following, he conferred the title of Catholic on the Spanish sovereigns. This orthodox title, which still continues to be the jewel most prized in the Spanish crown, has been appropriated in a peculiar manner to Ferdinand and Isabella, who are universally recognized in history as *Los Reyes Católicos.*

Ferdinand was too sensible of the peril to which the occupation of Naples by the French would expose his own interests to require any stimulant to action from the Roman pontiff. Naval preparations had been going forward during the summer, in the ports of Galicia and Guipuscoa. The land forces were intrusted to Gonsalvo de Córdova, better known in history as the Great Captain. Instructions were at the same time sent to the viceroy of Sicily, to provide for the security of that island, and to hold himself in readiness to act in concert with the Spanish fleet.

Ferdinand, however, determined to send one more embassy to Charles the Eighth before coming to an open rupture with him. He selected for this mission Juan de Albion and Antonio de Fonseca. The ambassadors freely enumerated the various causes of complaint entertained by their master against the French king, the insult offered to him in the person of his minister Alonso de Silva, the contumelious treatment of the pope, and forcible occupation of the fortresses and estates of the church, and finally the enterprise against Naples, the claims to which as a papal fief, could of right be determined in no other way than by the arbitration of the pontiff himself. Should King Charles consent to accept this arbitration, they tendered the good offices of their master as mediator between the parties; should he decline it, however, the king of Spain stood absolved from all further obligations of amity with him by the terms of the treaty of Barcelona.

Charles retorted with great acrimony on the conduct of Ferdinand, which he stigmatized as perfidious. As to the expedition against Naples, he had now gone too far to recede; and it would be soon enough to canvass the question of right when he had got possession of it.

At length Fonseca, producing the original treaty, bearing the signatures of the two monarchs, tore it in pieces before the eyes of Charles and his court.

Charles pressed forward on his march without further delay. Alfonso the Second, losing his confidence and martial courage, had precipitately abandoned his kingdom while the French were at Rome, and taken refuge in Sicily, where he formally abdicated the crown in favour of his son, Ferdinand the Second. This prince, then twenty-five years of age, was possessed of talent and energy competent to the present emergency, had he been sustained by his subjects. But the latter, besides being struck with the same panic which had paralysed the other people of Italy, had too little interest in the government to be willing to hazard much in its defence. They gave way in every direction as the French advanced, rendering hopeless every attempt of their spirited young monarch to rally them, till at length no alternative was left but to abandon his dominions to the enemy, without striking a blow in their defence. He withdrew to the neighbouring island of Ischia, whence he soon after passed into Sicily.

Charles the Eighth made his entrance into Naples at the head of his legions, February 22, 1495. The object of his expedition was now achieved. Although he assumed the titles of King of Sicily and of Jerusalem, and affected the state and authority of Emperor, he took no measures for prosecuting his chimerical enterprise further. He even neglected to provide for the security of his present conquest; and, without bestowing a thought on the government of his new dominions, resigned himself to licentious and effeminate pleasures.

While Charles was thus wasting his time and resources, a dark storm was gathering in the north. There was not a state through which he had passed, however friendly to his cause, which had not complaints to make of his insolence, his breach of faith, his infringement of their rights, and his exorbitant exactions. His impolitic treatment of Sforza had long since alientated that wily and restless politician. The emperor elect, Maximilian, whom the French king thought to have bound to his interests by the treaty of Senlis, took umbrage at his assumption of the imperial title and dignity. The Spanish ambassadors, Garcilasso de la Vega, and his brother, Lorenzo Suárez, the latter of whom resided at Venice, were indefatigable in stimulating the spirit of discontent.

Venice, from its remote position, seemed to afford the best point for coolly contemplating the general interests of Italy. Envoys of the different European powers assembled there, as if by common consent, with the view of concerting some scheme of operation for their mutual good. The result was the celebrated league of Venice. It was signed the last day of March, 1495, on the part of Spain, Austria, Rome, Milan, and the Venetian republic.

The ostensible object of the treaty, which was to last twenty-five years, was the preservation of the estates and rights of the confederates, especially of the Roman see. A large force, amounting in all to thirty-four thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, was to be assessed in stipulated proportions on each of the contracting parties. The secret articles of the treaty, however, went much further, providing a formidable plan of offensive operations. It was agreed in these that King Ferdinand should employ the Spanish armament, now arrived in Sicily, in re-establishing his kinsman on the throne of Naples; that a Venetian fleet, of forty galleys, should attack the French positions on the Neapolitan coasts; that the duke of Milan should expel the French from Asti, and blockade the passes of the Alps, so as to intercept the passage of further reinforcements; and that the emperor and the king of Spain should invade the French frontiers, and their expenses be defrayed by subsidies from the allies. Such were the terms of this treaty which exhibits the first example of those extensive combinations among European princes, for mutual defence, which afterwards became so frequent. The new treaty diffused general joy throughout Italy.

The tidings fell heavily on the ears of the French in Naples. They felt serious alarm as they beheld the storm of war gathering from other quarters—from Spain and Germany, in defiance of the treaties by which they had hoped to secure them. Charles saw the necessity of instant action.

Two courses presented themselves, either to strengthen himself in his new conquests and prepare to maintain them until he could receive fresh reinforcements from home, or to abandon them altogether and retreat across the Alps before the allies could muster in sufficient strength to oppose him.

CHAPTER XX

ITALIAN WARS—RETREAT OF CHARLES VIII—CAMPAIGNS OF GONSALVO DE CÓRDOVA—FINAL EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH—GONSALVO SUCCOURS THE POPE—TREATY WITH FRANCE—ORGANIZATION OF THE SPANISH MILITIA

1495–1498

CHARLES THE EIGHTH might have found abundant occupation, during his brief residence at Naples, in placing the kingdom in a proper posture of defence, and in conciliating the goodwill of the inhabitants, without which he could scarcely hope to maintain himself permanently in his conquest. Far from this, however, he showed the utmost aversion to business. His followers disgusted the nation still further by their insolence and unbridled licentiousness. The spirit of discontent spread more widely. A correspondence was entered into with Ferdinand in Sicily, and in a short time several of the most considerable cities of the kingdom openly avowed their allegiance to the house of Aragon.

In the meantime, Charles and his nobles began to look with longing eyes towards their own country. Their impatience was converted into anxiety on receiving tidings of the coalition mustering in the north.

Charles had entirely failed in his application to Pope Alexander the Sixth for a recognition of his right to Naples by a formal act of investiture. He determined, however, to go through the ceremony of a coronation on May 12th. On May 20th he set out on his homeward march, at the head of one-half of his army, amounting in all to not more than nine thousand fighting men. The other half was left for the defence of his new conquest. He neither took with him enough to cover his retreat, nor left enough to secure the preservation of Naples.

The allied forces assembled on the banks of the Taro, near Fornovo. An action was there fought in which King Charles achieved such deeds of heroism as shed a lustre over his ill-concerted enterprise, and which, if they did not gain him an undisputed victory, secured the fruits of it, by enabling him to retreat without further molestation. At Turin he entered into negotiation with the calculating duke of Milan, which terminated in the treaty of Vercelli, October 10, 1495. By this treaty Charles obtained no other advantage than that of detaching his cunning adversary from the coalition. Charles, yielding to his own impatience and that of his nobles, reached Grenoble with his army on the 27th of the month.

Charles the Eighth had left as his viceroy in Naples Gilbert de Bourbon, duke of Montpensier, a prince of the blood, but of slender military capacity. The command of the forces in Calabria was intrusted to M. d'Aubigny, a Scottish cavalier of the house of Stuart, raised by Charles to the dignity of grand constable of France. He had large experience in military matters, and was reputed one of the best officers in the French service.

Scarcely had Charles the Eighth quitted Naples, when his rival, Ferdinand, who had already completed his preparations in Sicily, made a descent on the southern extremity of Calabria. He was supported in this by the Spanish levies under the admiral Requesens, and Gonsalvo de Córdova, who reached Sicily in the month of May. The latter of these commanders was destined to act a most conspicuous part in the Italian wars.

Gonzalo Fernández de Córdova was born at Montilla, in 1453, three years younger than his brother.

On the breaking out of the civil wars, the two brothers attached themselves to the fortunes of Alfonso and Isabella. At their court, the young Gonsalvo soon attracted attention by the uncommon beauty of his person, his polished manners, and proficiency in all knightly exercises. He indulged in a profuse magnificence in his apparel, equipage, and general style of living, a circumstance which, accompanied with his brilliant qualities, gave him the title at the court of the prince of cavaliers.

The long war of Granada was the great school in which his military discipline was perfected. At the conclusion of the war, he was selected, together with Ferdinand's secretary Zafra, in consequence of his plausible address, and his familiarlity with the Arabic, to conduct the negotiation with the Moorish government.

Isabella's long and intimate acquaintance with Gonsalvo enabled her to form a correct estimate of his great talents. When the Italian expedition was resolved on, she instantly fixed her eyes on him as the most suitable person to conduct it. He possessed the qualities essential to success in a new and difficult enterprise—courage, constancy, singular prudence, dexterity in negotiation, and inexhaustible fertility of resource. She accordingly recommended him, without hesitation, to her husband, as the commander of the Italian army. He approved her choice.

The part of the squadron destined to convey the new general to Sicily was made ready for sea in the spring of 1495. After a tempestuous voyage, he reached Messina on May 24th. He found that Ferdinand, of Naples, had already begun operations in Calabria. The whole effective force of the Spaniards did not exceed six hundred lances and fifteen hundred foot, besides those employed in the fleet, amounting to about three thousand five hundred more.

On May 26th, Gonsalvo de Córdova crossed over to Reggio in Calabria, where a plan of operation was concerted between him and the Neapolitan monarch. Before opening the campaign, several strong places in the province, which owed allegiance to the Aragonese family, were placed in the hands of the Spanish general as security for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by his government in the war. As Gonsalvo placed little reliance on his Calabrian or Sicilian recruits, he was obliged to detach a considerable part of his Spanish forces to garrison these places.

The presence of their monarch revived the dormant loyalty of his Calabrian subjects. D'Aubigny, who lay at this time with an inconsiderable body of French troops in the south of Calabria, saw the necessity of some vigorous movement to check the further progress of the enemy. He determined to concentrate his forces scattered through the province, and march against Ferdinand, in the hope of bringing him to a decisive action.

Ferdinand determined to march out at once before he could reach Seminara, and give him battle. Gonsalvo was of a different opinion. His own troops had too little experience in war with the French and Swiss veterans to make him willing to risk all on the chances of a single battle. At all events, he thought it prudent, before coming to action, to obtain more accurate information than they now possessed, of the actual strength of the enemy.

He was overruled by the impatience of Ferdinand and his followers. King Ferdinand led out his little army without further delay against the enemy.

After traversing a chain of hills, stretching in an easterly direction from Seminara, at the distance of about three miles he arrived before a small stream, on the plains beyond which he discerned the French army in rapid advance against him. He resolved to wait its approach.

The Spanish *ginetes* succeeded in throwing the French gendarmerie into some disorder, before it could form after crossing the stream; but, no sooner was this accomplished than the Spaniards suddenly wheeled about and precipitately retreated with the intention of again returning on their assailants, after the fashion of the Moorish tactics. The Calabrian militia, not comprehending this manoeuvre, thought the battle lost, and, seized with panic, broke and fled.

King Ferdinand in vain attempted to rally the dastardly fugitives. Fortunately the French did not understand so well how to use a victory, as to gain it. They made no attempt to pursue. Ferdinand made his escape on the same day on board a vessel, which conveyed him back to Sicily. Thus terminated the first battle of importance in which Gonsalvo de Córdova held a distinguished command, the only one which he lost during his long career.

King Ferdinand, far from being disheartened by this defeat, gained new confidence from his experience. Relying on a similar feeling of loyalty in his capital, he determined to hazard a bold stroke for its recovery. He accordingly embarked at Messina, with a handful of troops only, on board the fleet of the Spanish admiral Requesens. The adventurous young monarch appeared off the harbour of Naples before the end of June.

Charles's viceroy, the duke of Montpensier, at that time garrisoned Naples with six thousand French troops. On the appearance of the Spanish navy, he marched out to prevent Ferdinand's landing, leaving a few only of his soldiers to keep the city in awe. But he had scarcely quitted it before the inhabitants, who had waited with impatience an opportunity for throwing off the yoke, sounded the tocsin, and, rising to arms through every part of the city and massacring the feeble remains of the garrison, shut the gates against him. Ferdinand, who had succeeded in drawing off the French commander in another direction, no sooner presented himself before the walls than he was received with transports of joy by the enthusiastic people.

In the meantime, Gonsalvo de Córdova was slowly fighting his way up through southern Calabria. The character of the country, rough and mountainous, like the Alpuxarras, and thickly sprinkled with fortified places, enabled him to bring into play the tactics which he had learned in the war of Granada. He made amends for paucity of numbers and want of real strength by rapidity of movement and the wily tactics of Moorish warfare. He adopted the policy practised by his master Ferdinand the Catholic in the Moorish war, lenient to the submissive foe, but wreaking terrible vengeance on such as resisted.

The French, disconcerted by these irregular operations, were further disheartened by the continued illness of D'Aubigny, and by the growing disaffection of the Calabrians.

Gonsalvo pushed forward, until by the end of the year he had overrun the whole of Lower Calabria. His progress would have been still more rapid but for the serious embarrassments which he experienced from want of supplies. By the end of the following spring he had reduced all Upper

Calabria, with the exception of a small corner of the province, in which D'Aubigny still maintained himself. At this crisis, he was summoned to support the king of Naples, who lay encamped before Atella, a town intrenched among the Apennines, on the western borders of the Basilicate.

The campaign of the preceding winter had terminated without any decisive results, the two armies of Montpensier and King Ferdinand having continued in sight of each other without ever coming to action. These protracted operations were fatal to the French. Their few supplies were intercepted by the peasantry of the country; their Swiss and German mercenaries mutinied and deserted for want of pay; and the Neapolitans in their service went off in great numbers disgusted with the insolent and overbearing manners of their new allies. Charles the Eighth, meanwhile, seemed to have shut out Italy from his thoughts.

At length Montpensier, finding no prospect of relief from home, and straitened by the want of provisions, determined to retreat to the fruitful province of Apulia. Ferdinand overtook the retreating army at the town of Atella, and completely intercepted its further progress.

Ferdinand, desirous if possible to bring the war to a close, by the capture of the whole French army, prepared for a vigorous blockade. He disposed his forces so as to intercept supplies by commanding the avenues to the town in every direction. He soon found, however, that his army, though considerably stronger than his rival's, was incompetent to this without further aid. He accordingly resolved to summon Gonsalvo de Córdova, the fame of whose exploits now resounded through every part of the kingdom.

The Spanish general received Ferdinand's summons while encamped with his army at Castrovillari, in the north of Upper Calabria. Before his departure, he prepared to strike such a blow as should, if possible, incapacitate his enemy for any effectual movement during his absence.

He received intelligence that a considerable number of Angevin lords, with their vassals and a reinforcement of French troops, were assembled at the little town of Laino. Gonsalvo determined to surprise this place and capture the rich spoils which it contained. A rich booty fell into the hands of the victors. The most glorious prize, however, was the Angevin barons, twenty in number, whom Gonsalvo, after the action, sent prisoners to Naples. This decisive blow, whose tidings spread like wildfire throughout the country, settled the fate of Calabria.

The Spanish general lost no time in pressing forward on his march towards Atella. Before quitting Calabria he had received a reinforcement of five hundred soldiers from Spain. His whole Spanish forces amounted to one hundred men-at-arms, five hundred light cavalry, and two thousand foot, picked men, and well schooled in the hardy service of the late campaign. Although a great part of his march lay through a hostile country, he encountered little opposition, for the terror of his name had everywhere gone before him. He arrived before Atella at the beginning of July.

All were eager to do honour to the man who had achieved such brilliant exploits, who, in less than a year, had made himself master of the larger part of the kingdom of Naples, and that, with the most limited resources, in defiance of the bravest and best disciplined soldiery in Europe. It was then, according to the Spanish writers, that he was by general consent greeted with the title of the Great Captain, by which he is much more familiarly known than by his own name.

Gonsalvo found the French sorely distressed by the blockade, which was so strictly maintained as to allow few supplies from abroad to pass into the town. His quick eye discovered at once, however, that in order to render it perfectly effectual, it would be necessary to destroy the mills in the vicinity which supplied Atella with flour. He undertook this on the day of his arrival, at the head of his own corps.

Gonsalvo, having gained his object, did not care to pursue the fugitives, but instantly set about demolishing the mills, every vestige of which, in a few hours, was swept from the ground. Three days after, he supported the Neapolitan troops in an assault on Ripa Candida, and carried that important post, by means of which Atella maintained a communication with the interior.

Thus cut off from all their resources, and no longer cheered by hopes of succour from their own country, the French, after suffering the severest privations, made overtures for a capitulation. The terms were soon arranged with the king of Naples, who had no desire but to rid his country of the invaders. It was agreed that, if the French commander did not receive assistance in thirty days, he should evacuate Atella and cause every place holding under him in the kingdom of Naples, with all its artillery, to be surrendered to King Ferdinand.

The young king of Naples did not live long to enjoy his triumphs. A careless and somewhat intemperate indulgence in pleasure, succeeding the hardy life which he had been lately leading, brought on a flux which carried him off in the twenty-eighth year of his age, and second of his reign. He was the fifth monarch who, in the brief compass of three years, had sat on the disastrous throne of Naples.

He was succeeded on the throne by his uncle Frederic, a prince of gentle disposition, endeared to the Neapolitans by repeated acts of benevolence, and by a magnanimous regard for justice. His first act was a general amnesty to the disaffected Neapolitans, who felt such confidence in his good faith that they returned, with scarcely an exception, to their allegiance. His next measure was to request the aid of Gonsalvo de Córdova in suppressing the hostile movements made by the French during his absence from Calabria. At the name of the Great Captain, the Italians flocked from all quarters to serve without pay under a banner which was sure to lead them to victory. Tower and town, as he advanced, went down before him; and the French general, D'Aubigny, soon saw himself reduced to the necessity of making the best terms he could with his conqueror, and evacuating the province altogether. The submission of Calabria was speedily followed by that of the few remaining cities in other quarters still garrisoned by the French, comprehending the last territory possessed by Charles the Eighth in the kingdom of Naples.

The submission of Calabria seemed to leave no further occupation for the arms of the Great Captain in Italy. Before quitting that country, however, he engaged in an adventure. Ostia, the seaport of Rome, was among the places in the papal territory forcibly occupied by Charles the Eighth, and on his retreat had been left to a French garrison. The place was so situated as entirely to command the mouth of the Tiber, enabling the piratical horde who garrisoned it almost wholly to destroy the commerce of Rome, and even to reduce the city to great distress for want of provisions. The government, incapable of defending itself, implored Gonsalvo's aid in dislodging this nest of formidable freebooters. The Spanish general, who was now at leisure, complied with the pontiff's solicitations, and soon after presented himself before Ostia with his little corps of troops, amounting in all to three hundred horse and fifteen hundred foot.

Gonsalvo, after coolly preparing his batteries, opened a heavy cannonade on the place, which at the end of five days effected a practicable breach in the walls. Gonsalvo, with more clemency than was usually shown on such occasions, stopped the carnage, and reserved his captives to grace his entry into the capital.

This was made a few days after, with all the pomp of a Roman triumph. The Spanish general knelt down to receive the benediction of the pope, but the latter, raising him up, kissed him on the forehead, and complimented him with the golden rose, which the Holy See was accustomed to dispense as the reward of its most devoted champions.

Gonsalvo experienced the most honourable reception from King Frederic on his return to Naples. The grateful monarch requited his services with the title of duke of St Angelo, and an estate, in Abruzzo containing three thousand vassals. Soon after, Gonsalvo, quitting Naples, revisited Sicily, where he adjusted certain differences which had arisen betwixt the viceroy and the inhabitants respecting the revenues of the island. Then embarking with his whole force, he reached the shores of Spain in the month of August, 1498. Isabella welcomed him with pride and satisfaction, and Ferdinand did not hesitate to declare that the Calabrian campaigns reflected more lustre on his crown than the conquest of Granada.

The total expulsion of the French from Naples brought hostilities between that nation and Spain to a close. The Spanish government, moreover, had little cause for satisfaction with its confederates. In short, every member of the league, after the first alarm subsided, had shown itself ready to sacrifice the common weal to its own private ends. With these causes of disgust, the Spanish government consented to a truce with France, to begin for itself on March 5th, and for the allies, if they chose to be included in it, seven weeks later, and to continue till the end of October, 1497. This truce was subsequently prolonged and, after the death of Charles the Eighth, terminated in a definitive treaty of peace, signed at Marcoussi, August 5, 1498.

There is little doubt that Ferdinand entertained the idea of asserting his claim, at some time or other, to the crown of Naples. All that now remained for Ferdinand, therefore, was to rest contented with the possession of the strong posts pledged for the reimbursement of his expenses in the war, and to make such use of the correspondence which the late campaigns had opened to him in Calabria, that, when the time arrived for action, he might act with effect.

Ferdinand's conduct through the whole of the Italian war had greatly enhanced his reputation throughout Europe for sagacity and prudence. His influence had been clearly discernible in every operation of moment, whether civil or military.

The Italian wars were of signal importance to the Spanish nation. Until that time, they had been cooped up within the narrow limits of the Peninsula, uninstructed and taking little interest in the concerns of the rest of Europe. A new world was now opened to them.

This war afforded them also a most useful lesson of tactics. The war of Granada had insensibly trained up a hardy militia, patient and capable of every privation and fatigue, and brought under strict subordination. But the nation was still defective in steady, well-disciplined infantry.

The Calabrian campaigns fortunately gave the Spaniards opportunity for studying their adversaries. The lesson was not lost. Before the end of the war important innovations were made in the discipline and arms of the

Spanish soldier. The Swiss pike, or lance, now became the regular weapon of one-third of the infantry. The division of the various corps in the cavalry and infantry services was arranged on more scientific principles, and the whole, in short, completely reorganized. Before the end of the war, preparations were made for a national militia, which should take the place of the ancient hermandad.

CHAPTER XXI

ALLIANCES OF THE ROYAL FAMILY—DEATH OF PRINCE JOHN AND PRINCESS ISABELLA

THE credit and authority which the Castilian sovereigns established by the success of their arms were greatly raised by the matrimonial connexions which they formed for their children. Their family consisted of one son and four daughters, whom they carefully educated in a manner befitting their high rank.

The marriage of the princess Isabella with Alonso, the heir of the Portuguese crown, in 1490, had been eagerly desired by her parents, not only for the possible contingency, which it afforded, of bringing the various monarchies of the Peninsula under one head (a design of which they never wholly lost sight), but from the wish to conciliate a formidable neighbour, who possessed various means of annoyance, which he had shown no reluctance to exert.

The new bride was received in Portugal in a spirit which gave cordial assurance of friendly relations for the future. Alonso's death, a few months after this event, however, blighted the fair hopes which had begun to open of a more friendly feeling between the two countries. His unfortunate widow withdrew into her own country.

On King John's death, in 1495, the crown of Portugal devolved on Emanuel. This prince had conceived a passion for the young and beautiful Isabella during her brief residence in Lisbon; and, soon after his accession to the throne, he despatched an embassy to the Spanish court inviting her to share it with him. But the princess, wedded to the memory of her early love, declined the proposals.

In the meanwhile, the Catholic sovereigns were occupied with negotiations for the settlement of the other members of their family. The ambitious schemes of Charles the Eighth established a community of interests among the great European states, such as had never before existed, or, at least, been understood; and the intimate relations thus introduced naturally led to intermarriages between the principal powers. The Spanish monarchs, in particular, had rarely gone beyond the limits of the Peninsula for their family alliances. The new confederacy into which Spain had entered now opened the way to more remote connexions, which were destined to exercise a permanent influence on the future politics of Europe. While Charles the Eighth was wasting his time at Naples, marriages were arranged between the royal houses of Spain and Austria, by which the weight of these great powers was thrown into the same scale, and the balance of Europe unsettled for the greater part of the following century.

The treaty provided that Prince John, the heir of the Spanish monarchies, then in his eighteenth year, should be united with the princess Margaret, daughter of the emperor Maximilian; and that the archduke Philip, his son and heir, and sovereign of the Low Countries in his mother's right, should marry Joanna, second daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella.

The following year arrangements were also concluded for the marriage of the youngest daughter of the Castilian sovereigns with a prince of the royal house of England, the first example of the kind for more than a century. Ferdinand had cultivated the goodwill of Henry the Seventh, in the hope of drawing him into the confederacy against the French monarch. The relations of amity between the two courts were still further strengthened by the treaty of marriage, finally adjusted October 1, 1496, and ratified the following year, between Arthur, prince of Wales, and the infanta Doña Catalina, conspicuous in English history, equally for her misfortunes and her virtues, as Catharine of Aragon.

The English connexion was necessarily deferred for some years, on account of the youth of the parties, neither of whom exceeded eleven years of age. No such impediment occurred in regard to the German alliances, and measures were taken at once for providing a suitable conveyance for the infanta Joanna into Flanders, which should bring back the princess Margaret on its return.

The infanta reached Flanders in safety, and, not long after, her nuptials with the archduke Philip were celebrated in the city of Lisle with all suitable pomp and solemnity.

The fleet was detained until the ensuing winter, to transport the destined bride of the young prince of the Asturias to Spain. She arrived in safety at the port of Santander in the Asturias, early in March, 1497.

The marriage ceremony took place on April 3rd, performed by the archbishop of Toledo in the presence of the grandees and principal nobility of Castile, the foreign ambassadors, and the delegates from Aragon.

The marriage of the heir apparent could not have been celebrated at a more auspicious period. It was in the midst of negotiations for a general peace, when the nation might reasonably hope to taste the sweets of repose, after so many uninterrupted years of war.

Not long after Prince John's marriage, the sovereigns had the satisfaction to witness that of their daughter Isabella, who, notwithstanding her repugnance to a second union, had yielded at length to the urgent entreaties of her parents to receive the addresses of her Portuguese lover. She required as the price of this, however, that Emanuel should first banish the Jews from his dominions, where they had bribed a resting-place since their expulsion from Spain. Emanuel, whose own liberal mind revolted at this unjust and impolitic measure, was weak enough to allow his passion to get the better of his principles, and passed sentence of exile on every Israelite in his kingdom.

The marriage, ushered in under such ill-omened auspices, was celebrated at the frontier town of Valencia de Alcántara, in the presence of the Catholic sovereigns, without pomp or parade of any kind. While they were detained there, an express arrived from Salamanca, bringing tidings of the dangerous illness of their son, the prince of the Asturias. Seized with a fever, he expired on October 4, 1497.

The court put on a new and deeper mourning than that hitherto used, as if to testify their unwonted grief. All offices, public and private, were closed for forty days.

By the death of John without heirs, the succession devolved on his eldest sister, the queen of Portugal. Intelligence, however, was received soon after that event that the archduke Philip, with the restless ambition which distinguished him in later life, had assumed for himself and his wife Joanna the title of 'princes of Castile'. Ferdinand and Isabella, disgusted with this proceeding, sent to request the attendance of the king and queen of Portugal in Castile, in order to secure a recognition of their rights by the national legislature.

After the usual oaths of recognition had been tendered, without opposition, by the different branches to the Portuguese princes, the court adjourned to Saragossa, where the legislature of Aragon was assembled for a similar purpose.

Some apprehensions were entertained, however, of the unfavourable disposition of that body, since the succession of females was not countenanced by the ancient usage of the country.

These apprehensions were fully realized. It was urged that by the will of the very last monarch, John the Second, it was provided that the crown should descend to the male issue of his son Ferdinand, and in default of such to the male issue of Ferdinand's daughters, to the entire exclusion of the females. At all events, it was better to postpone the consideration of this matter until the result of the queen of Portugal's pregnancy, then far advanced, should be ascertained.

Before anything was determined, the discussion was suddenly brought to a close by an unforeseen and most melancholy event—the death of the queen of Portugal. She had early felt a presentiment that she should not survive the birth of her child. This feeling strengthened as she approached the period of her delivery; and in less than one hour after that event, which took place on August 23, 1498, she expired.

This blow was almost too much for the unhappy mother, whose spirits had not yet had time to rally since the death of her only son. She schooled herself to continue to take an interest in all her public duties, but her health gradually sunk under this accumulated load of sorrow. The infant, whose birth had cost so dear, proved a male, and received the name of Miguel.

On Saturday, September 22nd, the cortes of Aragon assembled at Saragossa. Ferdinand and Isabella made oath as guardians of the heir apparent, before the Justice, not to exercise any jurisdiction whatever in the name of the young prince during his minority. The four estates then took the oath of fealty to Prince Miguel, as lawful heir and successor to the crown of Aragon, with the protestation that it should not be construed into a precedent for exacting such an oath hereafter during the minority of the heir apparent.

In January of the ensuing year the young prince's succession was duly confirmed by the cortes of Castile, and, in the following March, by that of Portugal. The untimely death of the destined heir of these honours took place before he had completed his second year.

CHAPTER XXII

DEATH OF CARDINAL MENDOZA— RISE OF XIMÉNES— ECCLESIASTICAL REFORM

IN the beginning of 1495, the sovereigns lost their old and faithful minister, the grand cardinal of Spain, Don Pedro González de Mendoza. In the unhappy feuds between Henry the Fourth and his younger brother Alfonso, the cardinal had remained faithful to the former. But on the death of that monarch, he threw his whole weight, with that of his powerful family, into the scale of Isabella. This was a most important acquisition to the royal cause; and Mendoza's consummate talents for business, recommended by the most agreeable address, secured him the confidence of both Ferdinand and Isabella.

Mendoza succeeded to the archiepiscopal see of Toledo. His new situation naturally led to still more intimate relations with the sovereigns, who uniformly deferred to his experience, consulting him on all important matters, not merely of a public, but of a private nature. In short, he gained such ascendency in the cabinet, during a long ministry of more than twenty years, that he was pleasantly called by the courtiers the 'third king of Spain'.

In one of her interviews with the dying minister the queen requested his advice respecting the nomination of his successor. The cardinal, in reply, earnestly cautioned her against raising any one of the principal nobility to this dignity. On being pressed to name the individual whom he thought best qualified, in every point of view, for the office, he is said to have recommended Fray Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros, a friar of the Franciscan order, and confessor of the queen.

Ximénez de Cisneros, or Ximénes, as he is usually called, was born in the year 1436. Three years after quitting the university, the young bachelor removed by the advice of his parents to Rome, as affording a better field for ecclesiastical preferment than he could find at home.

He entered on his noviciate in the convent of San Juan de los Reyes, at

Toledo. He distinguished his noviciate by practising every ingenious variety of mortification.

His superiors, choosing to change his place of residence according to custom, transferred him at the end of three years to the convent of Salzeda. Here he practised similar austerities, but it was not long before his high reputation raised him to the post of guardian of the convent.

By the elevation of Talavera to the metropolitan see of Granada, the office of queen's confessor became vacant. Cardinal Mendoza, who was consulted on the choice of a successor, well knew the importance of selecting a man of the highest integrity and talent, since the queen's tenderness of conscience led her to take counsel of her confessor, not merely in regard to her own spiritual concerns, but all the great measures of her administration. He at once fixed his eye on Ximénes, of whom he had never lost sight.

He recommended Ximénes in such emphatic terms to the queen, as raised a strong desire in her to see and converse with him herself. An invitation was accordingly sent him from the cardinal to repair to the court at Valladolid. Not many days after, Ximénes was invited to take charge of the queen's conscience.

Two years after this event, he was elected provincial of his order in Castile, which placed him at the head of its numerous religious establishments. In his frequent journeys for their inspection he travelled on foot, supporting himself by begging alms, comformably to the rules of his order. On his return he made a very unfavourable report to the queen on the condition of the various institutions, most of which he represented to have grievously relaxed in discipline and virtue.

The Spanish sovereigns had long witnessed with deep regret the scandalous abuses which had crept into these ancient institutions, and had employed commissioners for investigating and reforming them, but ineffectually. Isabella now gladly availed herself of the assistance of her confessor in bringing them into a better state of discipline. In the course of the same year, 1494, she obtained a bull with full authority for this purpose from Alexander the Sixth, the execution of which she intrusted to Ximénes. The work of reform required all the energies of his powerful mind, backed by the royal authority.

The work of reform went on slowly; but the untiring exertions of Ximénes gradually effected its adoption in many establishments.

While the reformation was thus silently going forward, the vacancy in the archbishopric of Toledo, already noticed, occurred by the death of the grand cardinal. The queen turned her eyes on various candidates before she determined in favour of her own confessor.

Although Ximénes showed no craving for power, it must be confessed he was by no means diffident in the use of it. After his elevation to the primacy, he retained the same simple and austere manners as before, dispensing his large revenues in public and private charities, but regulating his domestic expenditure with the severest economy, until he was admonished by the Holy See to adopt a state more consonant with the dignity of his office.

As soon as Ximénes entered on the duties of his office, he bent all the energies of his mind to the consummation of the schemes of reform which his royal mistress, as well as himself, had so much at heart. His attention was particularly directed to the clergy of his diocese, who had widely departed from the rule of St Augustine by which they were bound. His attempts at reform, however, excited such a lively dissatisfaction in this reverend body that they determined to send one of their own number to Rome, to prefer their complaints against the archbishop at the papal court. A close confinement for two and twenty months admonished the worthy canon of the inexpediency of thwarting the plans of Ximénes.

His attempts at innovation among the regular clergy of his own order encountered more serious opposition. The reform fell most heavily on the Franciscans, who were interdicted by their rules from holding property, whether as a community, or as individuals. More than a thousand friars, according to some accounts, quitted the country and passed over to Barbary, preferring rather to live with the infidel than conform to the strict letter of their founder's rules.

The difficulties of the reform were perhaps augmented by the mode in which it was conducted. Isabella, indeed, used all gentleness and persuasion; but Ximénes carried measures with a high and inexorable hand. He was naturally of an austere and arbitrary temper, and the severe training which he had undergone made him less charitable for the lapses of others, especially of those, who, like himself, had voluntarily incurred the obligations of monastic rule. He was conscious of the rectitude of his intentions; and, as he identified his own interests with those of the church, he regarded all opposition to himself as an offence against religion.

The clamour raised against his proceedings became at length so alarming, that the general of the Franciscans, who resided at Rome, determined to anticipate the regular period of his visit to Castile for inspecting the affairs of the order. His prejudices were enlisted against the measures of reform;

and he came over fully resolved to compel Ximénes to abandon it altogether, or to undermine, if possible, his credit and influence at court. But this functionary had neither the talent nor temper requisite for so arduous an undertaking. The general, however, on his return to Italy, had sufficient address to obtain authority from His Holiness to send a commission to Castile, who should be associated with Ximénes in the management of the reform. These individuals soon found themselves mere ciphers. They preferred such complaints of his proceedings to the pontifical court, that Alexander the Sixth was induced, with the advice of the college of cardinals, to issue a brief, November 9, 1496, peremptorily inhibiting the sovereigns from proceeding further in the affair, until it had been regularly submitted for examination to the head of the church.

Isabella, on receiving this unwelcome mandate, instantly sent it to Ximénes. The spirit of the latter, however, rose in proportion to the obstacles it had to encounter. He sought only to rally the queen's courage, beseeching her not to faint in the good work, now that it was so far advanced. Isabella, every act of whose administration may be said to have had reference, more or less remote, to the interests of religion, was as little likely as himself to falter in a matter which proposed these interests as its direct and only object. She assured her minister that she would support him in all that was practicable; and she lost no time in presenting the affair, through her agents, in such a light to the court of Rome, as might work a more favourable disposition in it. In this she succeeded, though not till after multiplied delays and embarrassments; and such ample powers were conceded to Ximénes, in conjunction with the apostolic nuncio, as enabled him to consummate his grand scheme of reform, in defiance of all the efforts of his enemies.

The reformation thus introduced extended to the religious institutions of every order equally with his own. It was most searching in its operation, reaching eventually to the moral conduct of the subjects of it, no less than the mere points of monastic discipline.

The beneficial changes wrought in this latter particular, which Isabella had far more at heart than any exterior forms of discipline, are the theme of unqualified panegyric with her contemporaries.

Notwithstanding the queen's most earnest wishes, it may be doubted whether this would have ever been achieved without the co-operation of a man like Ximénes, whose character combined in itself all the essential elements of a reformer. Happily Isabella was permitted to see before her death, if not the completion, at least the commencement of a decided amendment in the morals of the religious orders.

CHAPTER XXIII

XIMÉNES IN GRANADA—PERSECUTION, INSURRECTION, AND CONVERSION OF THE MOORS

1499–1500

NEARLY eight years had elapsed since the conquest of Granada, and the subjugated kingdom continued to repose in peaceful security under the shadow of the treaty which guaranteed the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient laws and religion. This unbroken continuance of public tranquillity, especially difficult to be maintained among the jarring elements of the capital, whose motley population of Moors, renegades, and Christians, suggested perpetual points of collision, must be chiefly referred to the discreet and temperate conduct of the two individuals whom Isabella had charged with the civil and ecclesiastical government. These were Mendoza, count of Tendilla, and Talavera, archbishop of Granada.

The former, immediately after the conquest of Granada, was made alcayde and captain general of the kingdom, a post for which he was every way qualified by his prudence, firmness, enlightened views and long experience.

The latter personage was Fray Fernando de Talavera, a Hieronymite monk, who, having been twenty years prior of the monastery of Santa María del Prado, near Valladolid, was made confessor of Queen Isabella, and afterwards of the king. This situation necessarily gave him considerable influence in all public measures. If the keeping of the royal conscience could be safely intrusted to anyone, it might certainly be to this estimable prelate, equally distinguished for his learning, amiable manners, and unblemished piety.

After the conquest, he exchanged the bishopric of Ávila for the archiepiscopal see of Granada. The subject which pressed most seriously on the mind of the good archbishop was the conversion of the Moors, whose spiritual blindness he regarded with feelings of tenderness and charity. He set about learning Arabic, that he might communicate with the Moors in their own language, and commanded his clergy to do the same. He caused an Arabic vocabulary, grammar, and catechism to be compiled and a version in the same tongue to be made of the liturgy, comprehending the selections from the Gospels.

These wise and benevolent measures of the good prelate acquired him great authority among the Moors. The progress of proselytism, however, was necessarily slow. Many of the more zealous clergy and religious persons represented to the sovereigns that the whole of the stiff-necked race of Mahomet might justly be required to submit without exception to instant baptism, or to sell their estates and remove to Africa.

Among those in favour of more active measures was Ximénes, archbishop of Toledo. Having followed the court to Granada in the autumn of 1499, he took the occasion to communicate his views to Talavera, the archbishop, requesting leave at the same time to participate with him in his labour of love, to which the latter assented.

No sooner had the sovereigns left the city, than Ximénes invited some of the leading Mussulman doctors to a conference, in which he expounded, with all the eloquence at his command, the true foundations of the Christian faith, and the errors of their own; and, that his teaching might be the more palatable, enforced it by liberal presents, consisting mostly of rich and costly articles of dress, of which the Moors were at all times exceedingly fond. This policy he pursued for some time, till the effect became visible. The example of these learned persons was soon followed by great numbers of their illiterate disciples, insomuch that no less than four thousand are said to have presented themselves in one day for baptism.

So far all went on prosperously. There were some, indeed, among the Mahometans, who regarded these proceedings as repugnant, if not to the letter, at least to the spirit of the original treaty of capitulation. But Ximénes, whose zeal had mounted up to fever heat in the excitement of success, was not to be cooled by any opposition, however formidable.

The work of proselytism now went on apace, for terror was added to the other stimulants. The zealous propagandist, meanwhile, flushed with success, resolved not only to exterminate infidelity, but the very characters in which its teachings were recorded. He accordingly caused all the Arabic manuscripts which he could procure to be heaped together in a common pile in one of the great squares of the city. He reserved for his university of Alcalá three hundred works relating to medical science, in which the Moors were as pre-eminent in that day as the Europeans were deficient. All the rest, amounting to many thousands, he consigned to indiscriminate conflagration.

This melancholy *auto da fe* was celebrated, not by an unlettered barbarian, but by a cultivated prelate, who was at that very time actively employing his large revenues in the publication of the most stupendous literary work of the age, and in the endowment of the most learned university of Spain.

Such as could, secreted the manuscripts in their possession till an opportunity occurred for conveying them out of the country; and many thousands in this way were privately shipped over to Barbary. Thus Arabian literature became rare in the libraries of the very country to which it was indigenous; and Arabic scholarship, once so flourishing in Spain, gradually fell into decay.

The high hand with which Ximénes now carried measures excited serious alarm in many of the more discreet and temperate Castilians in the city. They besought him to use greater forbearance, remonstrating against his obvious violations of the treaty, as well as against the expediency of forced conversions, which could not, in the nature of things, be lasting. He went on with unflinching resolution.

But the patience of the Moors began now to be exhausted. Many signs of this might be discerned by much less acute optics than those of the archbishop. At length an incident occurred which led to a general explosion.

Three of Ximénes's servants were sent on some business to the Albaycin, a quarter inhabited exclusively by Moors, and encompassed by walls which separated it from the rest of the city. These men had made themselves peculiarly odious to the people by their activity in their master's service. A dispute having arisen, two of the servants were massacred on the spot, and their comrade escaped with difficulty from the infuriated mob. The affair operated as the signal for insurrection. In a few hours the whole Albaycin was in rebellion.

The following night a large number of the enraged populace made their way to the quarters of Ximénes, with the purpose of taking summary vengeance on his head for all his persecutions.

The building, however, proved too strong for the utmost efforts of the mob. But no exertions could restore order to the tumultuous populace.

At length, after this disorderly state of things had lasted for several days, Talavera, the archbishop of Granada, resolved to try the effect of his personal influence by visiting himself the disaffected quarter. At the sight of their venerable pastor, the passions of the multitude were stilled. The count of Tendilla no sooner learned the issue than he followed into the Albaycin, attended by a handful of soldiers. When he reached the place where the mob was gathered, he threw his bonnet into the midst of them, in token of his pacific intentions.

These two individuals took advantage of this favourable change of feeling to exposulate with the Moors on the folly and desperation of their conduct, which must involve them in a struggle with such overwhelming odds as that of the whole Spanish monarchy. The people, laying aside their hostile preparations, returned once more to their regular employments.

The rumour of the insurrection, meanwhile, with the usual exaggeration, reached Seville, where the court was then residing. In one respect rumour did justice, by imputing the whole blame of the affair to the intemperate zeal of Ximénes. The king was heard to exclaim tauntingly to the queen, 'So we are like to pay dear for your archbishop, whose rashness has lost us in a few hours, what we have been years in acquiring'.

The queen, confounded at the tidings, and unable to comprehend the silence of Ximénes, instantly wrote to him in the severest terms, demanding an explanation of the whole proceeding. He hastened to Seville in person, and presenting himself before the sovereigns, boldly assumed the responsibility of the whole proceeding. If he had erred, he said, it could be imputed to no other motive, at worst, than too great zeal for the interests of religion. He concluded with assuring them that it would be an act of clemency to offer pardon on the alternatives of conversion or exile!

The archbishop's discourse dispelled the clouds of royal indignation. In due time commissioners were went to Granada, fully authorized to inquire into the late disturbances and punish their guilty authors. Many sold their estates and migrated to Barbary; and the remainder of the population, whether from fear of punishment or contagion of example, consented to receive baptism. From this period the name of Moors, which had gradually superseded the primitive one of Spanish Arabs, gave way to the title of Moriscoes.

The good archbishop Talavera was heard in the fulness of his heart to exclaim, that 'Ximénes had achieved greater triumphs than even Ferdinand and Isabella; since they had conquered only the soil, while he had gained the souls of Granada!'

CHAPTER XXIV

RISING IN THE ALPUXARRAS—DEATH OF ALONSO DE AGUILAR—EDICT AGAINST THE MOORS

1500–1502

WHILE affairs went forward so triumphantly in the capital of Granada, they excited general discontent in other parts of that kingdom, especially the wild regions of the Alpuxarras. In ancient times they had afforded a hardy militia for the princes of Granada; and they now exhibited an unshaken attachment to their ancient institutions and religion, which had been somewhat effaced in the great cities by more intimate intercourse with the Europeans.

These warlike mountaineers beheld with gathering resentment the faithless conduct pursued towards their countrymen, which, they had good reason to fear, would soon be extended to themselves; and their fiery passions were inflamed to an ungovernable height by the public apostasy of Granada. They at length resolved to anticipate any similar attempt on themselves by a general insurrection. They accordingly seized on the fortresses and strong passes throughout the country, and began as usual with forays into the lands of the Christians.

These bold acts excited much alarm in the capital, and the count of Tendilla took vigorous measures for quenching the rebellion in its birth. Gonsalvo de Córdova was at that time residing in Granada; and Tendilla availed himself of his assistance to enforce a hasty muster of levies, and march at once against the enemy.

His first movement was against Huejar, a fortified town situated in one of the eastern ranges of the Alpuxarras, whose inhabitants had taken the lead in the insurrection. The enterprise was attended with more difficulty than was expected.

The revolt wore so serious an aspect that King Ferdinand found it necessary to take the field in person. In February, 1500, he directed his march on Lanjaron, one of the towns most active in the revolt.

At nearly the same time, the count of Lerín took several other fortified places in the Alpuxarras, in one of which he blew up a mosque filled with women and children. Hostilities were carried on with all the ferocity of a civil, or rather servile war. The Spaniards, repudiating all the feelings of courtesy and generosity which they had once shown to the same men, now regarded them only as rebellious vassals whom the public safety required to be not merely chastised, but exterminated.

These severities, added to the conviction of their own impotence, at length broke the spirit of the Moors. The Catholic king consented to terms which may be deemed reasonable, at least in comparison with his previous policy—the surrender of their arms and fortresses, and the payment of fifty thousand ducats.

As soon as tranquillity was re-established, measures were taken for securing it permanently by introducing Christianity among the natives. Holy men were therefore sent as missionaries, to admonish them, and to instruct them. Various immunities were also proposed as an additional incentive to conversion. The wisdom of these temperate measures became every day more visible.

This defection, however, caused great scandal among the more sturdy of their countrymen, and a new insurrection broke out on the eastern confines of the Alpuxarras, which was suppressed with similar circumstances of stern severity, and a similar exaction of a heavy sum of money.

But while the murmurs of rebellion died away in the east, they were heard in thunders from the distant hills on the western borders of Granada. This district, comprehending the sierras Vermeja and Villa Luenga, in the neighbourhood of Ronda, was peopled by a warlike race. They broke out in the most atrocious acts of violence, murdering the Christian missionaries, and kidnapping, if report be true, many Spaniards of both sexes, whom they sold as slaves in Africa. They were accused of entering into a secret correspondence with their brethren on the opposite shore, in order to secure their support in the meditated revolt.

The government displayed its usual promptness and energy on this occasion. The principal leaders of the expedition were the count of Cifuentes, the count of Ureña, and Alonso de Aguilar, elder brother of the Great Captain.

It was determined by the chiefs to strike at once into the heart of the Sierra Vermeja. On March 18, 1501, the little army encamped before Monarda, on the skirts of a mountain where the Moors were understood to have assembled in considerable force. Aguilar's troops occupied the van.

The Moors fell back as the Christians advanced, and, retreating nimbly from point to point, led them up the rugged steeps far into the recesses of the mountains. At length they reached an open level, encompassed on all sides by a natural rampart of rocks, where they had deposited their valuable effects, together with their wives and children. The latter, at sight of the invaders, uttered dismal cries, and fled into the remoter depths of the sierra.

The Christians were too much attracted by the rich spoil before them, and dispersed in every direction in quest of plunder.

The Moors, meanwhile, finding themselves no longer pursued, resolved to return to the scene of action and surprise their incautious enemy. Stealthily advancing, therefore, under the shadows of night, now falling thick around, they poured through the rocky defiles upon the astonished Spaniards.

Amidst this dreadful confusion, the count of Ureña succeeded in gaining a lower level of the sierra, where he halted and endeavoured to rally his panic-struck followers. His noble comrade, Alonso de Aguilar, still maintained his position on the heights above, refusing all entreaties of his followers to attempt a retreat.

Meantime the brave little band who remained true to Aguilar had fallen one after another. The chief, left almost alone, retreated to a huge rock which rose in the middle of the plain, and placing his back against it, still made fight, though weakened by loss of blood, like a lion at bay, against his enemies. Thus fell Alonso Hernández de Córdova, or Alonso de Aguilar, as he is commonly called from the land where his family estates lay.

The victorious Moors, all this time, were driving the unresisting Spaniards down the dark steeps of the sierra. The rising day, which dispersed their foes, now revealed to the Christians the dreadful extent of their own losses. The sad tidings of the defeat soon spread throughout the country, occasioning a sensation such as had not been felt since the tragic affair of the Axarquia.

By the beginning of April, King Ferdinand found himself at Ronda, at the head of a strong body of troops, which he determined to lead in person, and take bloody vengeance on the rebels.

These latter, however, far from being encouraged, were appalled by the extent of their own success; and, as the note of warlike preparation reached them in their fastnesses, they felt their temerity in thus bringing the whole weight of the Castilian monarchy on their heads. They accordingly abandoned all thoughts of further resistance, and lost no time in sending deputies to the king's camp, to deprecate his anger, and sue in the most submissive terms for pardon.

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Ferdinand granted a general amnesty to those concerned in the insurrection, on the alternative of baptism or exile, engaging at the same time to provide conveyance for such as chose to leave the country, on the payment of ten doblas of gold a head.

These engagements were punctually fulfilled. The Moorish emigrants were transported in public galleys to the Barbary coast. The number, however, was probably small, by far the greater part being obliged, however reluctantly, from want of funds, to remain and be baptized.

Although every spark of insurrection was thus extinguished, it was long, very long, before the Spanish nation could recover from the blow, or forget the sad story of its disaster in the Red Sierra. It became the theme, not only of chronicle, but of song. The note of sorrow was prolonged in many a plaintive *romance*, and the names of Aguilar and his unfortunate companions were embalmed in that beautiful minstrelsy, scarcely less imperishable, and far more touching, than the stately and elaborate records of history.

Tranquillity was now restored throughout the wide borders of Granada. Every Moor, in exterior at least, had become a Christian. Every mosque had been converted into a Christian church. Still the country was not entirely purified from the stain of Islamism, since many professing their ancient faith were scattered over different parts of the kingdom of Castile, where they had been long resident before the surrender of their capital. The late events seemed to have no other effect than to harden them in error; and the Spanish government saw with alarm the pernicious influence of their example and persuasion, in shaking the infirm faith of the new converts.

To obviate this, an ordinance was published, in the summer of 1501, prohibiting all intercourse between these Moors and the orthodox kingdom of Granada. At length, however, convinced that there was no other way to save the precious seed from being choked by the thorns of infidelity than to eradicate them altogether, the sovereigns came to the extraordinary resolution of offering them the alternative of baptism or exile. They issued a *pragmática* to that effect from Seville, February 12, 1502. After a preamble, the act goes on to state that all the unbaptized Moors in the kingdoms of Castile and León above fourteen years of age if males, and twelve if females, must leave the country by the end of April following; that they might sell their property in the meantime, and take the proceeds in anything save gold and silver and merchandise regularly prohibited; and, finally that they might emigrate to any foreign country, except the dominions of the Grand Turk, and such parts of Africa as Spain was then at war with. Obedience to these severe provisions was enforced by the penalties of death and confiscation of property. We have nowhere met with any estimate of the number who migrated on this occasion. Castile might now boast, the first time for eight centuries, that every outward stain, at least, of infidelity, was purified from her bosom.

With these events may be said to terminate the history of the Moors, or the Moriscoes, as henceforth called, under the present reign. Eight centuries had elapsed since their first occupation of the country, during which period they had exhibited all the various phases of civilization, from its dawn to its decline. Ten years had sufficed to overturn the splendid remains of this powerful empire, and ten more for its nominal conversion to Christianity.

CHAPTER XXV

COLUMBUS—PROSECUTION OF DISCOVERY—HIS TREATMENT BY THE COURT

1494–1503

'AMIDST the storms and troubles of Italy, Spain was every day stretching her wings over a wider sweep of empire, and extending the glory of her name to the far Antipodes.' Such is the swell of exultation with which the enthusiastic Italian, Martyr, notices the brilliant progress of discovery under his illustrious countryman Columbus. But, in less than two years from the commencement of his second voyage, the face of things experienced a melancholy change. Accounts were received at home of the most alarming discontent and disaffection in the colony, while the actual returns from these vaunted regions were so scanty as to bear no proportion to the expenses of the expedition.

This unfortunate result was in a great measure imputable to the colonists themselves. Most of them were adventurers. They were without subordination, patience, industry. They seemed to feel themselves released from the constraints of all law. They harboured jealousy and distrust of the admiral as a foreigner. From the first moment of their landing in Hispaniola, they indulged the most wanton license in regard to the unoffending natives. Their outrages soon provoked a general resistance, which led to such a war of extermination that, in less than four years after the Spaniards had set foot on the island, one-third of its population were sacrificed!

These excesses, and a total neglect of agriculture, at length occasioned an alarming scarcity of provisions. In order to avoid the famine which menaced his little colony, Columbus was obliged to resort to coercive measures, shortening the allowance of food, and compelling all to work, without distinction of rank. These unpalatable regulations soon bred general discontent. The high-mettled hidalgos, especially, complained loudly.

The Spanish sovereigns were now assailed with complaints of the maladministration of Columbus. Although they sent out an agent to inquire into the nature of the troubles which threatened the existence of the colony, they were careful to select an individual who they thought would be most grateful to the admiral; and when the latter in the following year, 1496, returned to Spain, they received him with the most ample acknowledgments of regard.

The admiral brought with him, as before, such samples of the productions of the western hemisphere, as would strike the public eye, and keep alive the feeling of curiosity.

But neither the attractions of the spectacle nor the glowing representations of Columbus could rekindle the dormant enthusiasm of the nation. The novelty of the thing had passed. They heard a different tale, moreover, from the other voyagers, whose wan and sallow visages provoked the bitter jest that they had returned with more gold in their faces than in their pockets.

Isabella was far from participating in this unreasonable distrust. But although the queen was willing to give the most effectual support to his great enterprise, the situation of the country was such as made delay in its immediate prosecution unavoidable. Large expense was necessarily incurred for the actual maintenance of the colony; the exchequer was liberally drained, moreover, by the Italian war, as well as by the profuse magnificence with which the nuptials of the royal family were now celebrating.

This unwelcome delay, however, was softened to Columbus by the distinguished marks which he daily received of the royal favour; and various ordinances were passed, confirming and enlarging his great powers and privileges.

Among the impediments to the immediate completion of the arrangements for the admiral's third voyage may be also noticed the hostility of Bishop Fonseca, who, at this period, had the control of the Indian department, a man of an irritable, and, as it would seem, most unforgiving temper, who, from some causes of disgust which he had conceived with Columbus previous to his second voyage, lost no opportunity of annoying and thwarting him.

From these various circumstances the admiral's fleet was not ready before the beginning of 1498. As few were found willing to embark in a service which had fallen into such general discredit, this led to the ruinous expedient of substituting convicts.

At length, all being in readiness, the admiral embarked on board his little squadron, consisting of six vessels. He steered in a more southerly direction than on his preceding voyages, and on the first of August succeeded in reaching *terra firma*, thus entitling himself to the glory of being the first to set foot on the great southern continent.

On his arrival at Hispaniola, Columbus found the affairs of the colony in the most deplorable confusion. An insurrection had been raised against his brother Bartholomew, to whom he had intrusted the government during his absence. In this desperate rebellion, all the interests of the community were neglected. The admiral succeeded at length in patching up a specious reconciliation by such concessions as essentially impaired his own authority. Among these was the grant of large tracts of land to the rebels, with permission to the proprietor to employ an allotted number of the natives in its cultivation. This was the origin of the celebrated system of *repartimientos*.

Nearly a year elapsed after the admiral's return to Hispaniola, before he succeeded in allaying these intestine feuds. Meanwhile, rumours were reaching Spain of the distractions of the colony, accompanied with most injurious imputations on the conduct of Columbus and his brother, who were loudly accused of oppressing both Spaniards and Indians, and of sacrificing the public interests. These complaints were rung in the very ears of the sovereigns by numbers of the disaffected colonists, who had returned to Spain.

There were not wanting, even, persons of high consideration at the court, to give credence and circulation to these calumnies. The recent discovery of the pearl fisheries of Paria, as well as of more prolific veins of the precious metals in Hispaniola, and the prospect of an indefinite extent of unexplored country, opened by the late voyage of Columbus, made the New World a tempting bait for the avarice and ambition of the most potent grandee.

Whatever weight these absurd charges may have had with Ferdinand, they had no power to shake the queen's confidence in Columbus, or lead her to suspect his loyalty for a moment. But the long-continued distractions of the colony made her feel a natural distrust of his capacity to govern it. These doubts were mingled, it is true, with sterner feelings towards the admiral, on the arrival, at this juncture, of several of the rebels with the Indian slaves assigned to them by his orders.

Isabella had been deeply interested by the accounts she had received from the admiral himself of the gentle, unoffending character of the islanders; and she revolted at the idea of consigning them to the horrors of slavery, without even an effort for their conversion. She yielded still further to the benevolent impulses of her nature, causing holy men to be instructed as far as possible in the Indian languages, and sent out as missionaries for the conversion of the natives. In the same beneficent spirit, the royal letters and ordinances urged over and over again the paramount obligation of the religious instruction of the natives, and of observing the utmost gentleness and humanity in all dealings with them.

After a long and visible reluctance, the queen acquiesced in sending out a commissioner to investigate the affairs of the colony. The person appointed to this delicate trust was Don Francisco de Bobadilla, a poor knight of Calatrava. He was invested with supreme powers of civil and criminal jurisdiction. He was to bring to trial and pass sentence on all such as had conspired against the authority of Columbus. He was authorized to take possession of the fortresses, vessels, public stores, and property of every description, to dispose of all offices, and to command whatever persons he might deem expedient for the tranquillity of the island, without distinction of rank, to return to Spain, and present themselves before the sovereigns.

From the very first, he regarded Columbus in the light of a convicted criminal, on whom it was his business to execute the sentence of the law. Accordingly, on his arrival at the island, after an ostentatious parade of his credentials, he commanded the admiral to appear before him, and, without affecting the forms of legal inquiry, at once caused him to be manacled, and thrown into prison. Bobadilla, after raking together all the calumnies which hatred or the hope of favour could extort, caused the mass of accusation to be sent back to Spain with the admiral, whom he commanded to be kept strictly in irons during the passage.

So enormous an outrage shocked the minds of those most prejudiced against Columbus. All seemed to feel it as a national dishonour, that such indignities should be heaped on the man who, whatever might be his indiscretions, had done so much for Spain.

None partook of the general indignation more strongly than Ferdinand and Isabella. They sent to Cádiz and commanded the admiral to be released from his ignominious fetters. They wrote to him, requesting him to appear before them as speedily as possible at Granada. Columbus proceeded without delay to Granada.

Much censure has attached to the Spanish government for its share in this unfortunate transaction, both in the appointment of so unsuitable an agent as Bobadilla, and the delegation of such broad and indefinite powers. With regard to the first, it was an error of judgment.

But in regard to the second charge, of delegating unwarrantable powers, it should be remembered that the grievances of the colony were represented as of a most pressing nature, demanding a prompt and peremptory remedy; that a more limited and partial authority, dependent for its exercise on instructions from the government at home, might be attended with ruinous delays; that this authority must necessarily be paramount to that of Columbus, who was a party implicated; and that, although unlimited jurisdiction was given over all offences committed against him, yet neither he nor his friends were to be molested in any other way than by temporary suspension from office, and a return to their own country, where the merits of their case might be submitted to the sovereigns themselves.

Although the king and queen determined without hesitation on the complete restoration of the admiral's honours, they thought it better to defer his reappointment to the government of the colony until the present disturbances should be settled, and he might return there with personal safety and advantage. In the meantime, they resolved to send out a competent individual, and to support him with such a force as should overawe faction, and enable him to place the tranquillity of the island on a permanent basis.

The person selected was Don Nicolás de Ovando, comendador of Lares, of the military order of Alcántara. He was a man of acknowledged prudence and sagacity, temperate in his habits, and plausible and politic in his address. He was furnished with a fleet of two and thirty sail, carrying twenty-five hundred persons, many of them of the best families in the kingdom, with every variety of article for the nourishment and permanent prosperity of the colony.

The new governor was instructed immediately on his arrival to send Bobadilla home for trial. Under his lax administration, abuses of every kind had multiplied to an alarming extent, and the poor natives, in particular, were rapidly wasting away under the new and most inhuman arrangement of the *repartimientos* which he established.

The governor embarked on board his magnificent flotilla, and crossed the bar of St Lúcar, February 15, 1502.

The Spanish government has been roundly taxed with injustice and ingratitude for its delay in restoring Columbus to the full possession of his colonial authority; and it appears to be wholly undeserved. Independent of the obvious inexpediency of returning him immediately to the theatre of disaffection, before the embers of ancient animosity had had time to cool, there were several features in his character which make it doubtful whether he were the most competent person, in any event, for an emergency demanding at once the greatest coolness, consummate address, and acknowledged personal authority. His sublime enthusiasm, which carried him victorious over every obstacle, involved him also in numerous embarrassments, which men of more phlegmatic temperament would have escaped. It gave an exaggerated colouring to his views and descriptions. It led him, in his eagerness for the achievement of his great enterprises, to be less scrupulous and politic as to the means, than a less ardent spirit would have been. His pertinacious adherence to the scheme of Indian slavery and his impolitic regulation compelling the labour of the hidalgos are pertinent examples of this. He was, moreover, a foreigner, without rank, fortune, or powerful friends; and his high and sudden elevation naturally raised him up a thousand enemies among a proud, punctilious, and intensely national people. Under these multiplied embarrassments, resulting from peculiarities of character and situation, the sovereigns might well be excused for not intrusting Columbus, at this delicate crisis, with disentangling the meshes of intrigue and faction in which the affairs of the colony were so unhappily involved.

It is more difficult to excuse the paltry equipment with which the admiral was suffered to undertake his fourth and last voyage. The object proposed by this expedition was the discovery of a passage to the great Indian Ocean. Four caravels, only, were furnished for the expedition, the largest of which did not exceed seventy tons burden.

Columbus, oppressed with growing infirmities and a consciousness, perhaps, of the decline of popular favour, manifested unusual despondency previous to his embarkation. He talked, even, of resigning the task of further discovery to his brother Bartholomew.

The great inclination, however, which the admiral had to serve the Catholic sovereigns, and especially the most serene queen, says Ferdinand Columbus, induced him to lay aside his scruples and encounter the perils and fatigues of another voyage. The veteran navigator, quitting the port of Cádiz on March 9, 1502, once more spread his sails.

The admiral had received instructions not to touch at Hispaniola on his outward voyage. The leaky condition of one of his ships, however, and the signs of an approaching storm, induced him to seek a temporary refuge there. At the same time, he counselled Ovando to delay for a few days the departure of the fleet, then riding in the harbour, which was destined to carry Bobadilla and the rebels with their ill-gotten treasures back to Spain. The churlish governor, however, not only refused Columbus admittance, but gave orders for the instant departure of the vessels. Scarcely had the Spanish fleet quitted its moorings before one of those tremendous hurricanes came on which so often desolate these tropical regions. Out of eighteen ships, not more than three or four escaped. Columbus with his little squadron rode out the storm in safety under the lee of the island, where he had prudently taken shelter on being so rudely repulsed from the port.

CHAPTER XXVI

SPANISH COLONIAL POLICY

FERDINAND and Isabella manifested from the first an eager and enlightened curiosity in reference to their new acquisitions, constantly interrogating the admiral minutely as to their soil and climate, their various vegetable and mineral products, and especially the character of the uncivilized races who inhabited them. Through their provident attention, in a very few years after its discovery, the island of Hispaniola was in possession of the most important domestic animals, as well as fruits and vegetables of the old world.

Emigration to the new countries was encouraged by the liberal tenor of royal ordinances. The settlers in Hispaniola were to have their passage free, to be excused from taxes, to have the absolute property of such plantations on the island as they should engage to cultivate for four years; and they were furnished with a gratuitous supply of grain and stock for their farms. All exports and imports were exempted from duty. Scientific men and artisans of every description were sent out. To provide for the greater security and quiet of the island, Ovando was authorized to gather the residents into towns, which were endowed with the privileges appertaining to similar corporations in the mother country. A number of married men, with their families, were encouraged to establish themselves in them, with the view of giving greater solidity and permanence to the settlement.

With these wise provisons were others, of the illiberal spirit of the age. Such were those prohibiting Jews, Moors, or indeed any but Castilians, for whom the discovery was considered exclusively to have been made, from inhabiting, or even visiting, the New World. The government kept a most jealous eye upon what it regarded as its own peculiar perquisites, reserving to itself the exclusive possession of all minerals, dyewoods, and precious stones that should be discovered; and, although private persons were allowed to search for gold, they were subjected to the exorbitant tax of two-thirds, subsequently reduced to one-fifth, of all they should obtain, for the crown.

The measure which contributed more effectually than any other, at this period, to the progress of discovery and colonization, was the license granted, under certain regulations, in 1495, for voyages undertaken by private individuals. No use was made of this permission until 1499. The reports of the admiral's third voyage, however, and the beautiful specimens of pearls which he sent home from the coast of Paria, revived the cupidity of the nation. Private adventurers now proposed to avail themselves of the license already granted.

The ships fitted out under the general license were required to reserve one-tenth of their tonnage for the crown, as well as two-thirds of all the gold, and ten per cent of all other commodities which they should procure.

With this encouragement the more wealthy merchants of Seville, Cádiz, and Palos, the old theatre of nautical enterprise, freighted and sent out little squadrons of three or four vessels each, which they intrusted to the experienced mariners who had accompanied Columbus in his first voyage, or since followed in his footsteps. The greater number were obliged to content themselves with the more enduring but barren honours of discovery.

The active spirit of enterprise now awakened, and the enlarged commercial relations with the new colonies required a more perfect organization of the department for Indian affairs. An ordinance dated at Alcalá, January 20, 1503, provided that a board should be established, consisting of three functionaries, with the titles of treasurer, factor, and comptroller. Their permanent residence was assigned in the old alcázar of Seville. The board was expected to make itself thoroughly acquainted with whatever concerned the colonies, and to afford the government all information that could be obtained affecting their interests and commercial prosperity. It was empowered to grant licenses under the regular conditions, to provide for the equipment of fleets, to determine their destination, and furnish them instructions on sailing. All merchandise for exportation was to be deposited in the alcázar, where the return cargoes were to be received, and contracts made for their sale. Its supervision was to extend in like manner over all vessels which might take their departure from the port of Cádiz, as well as from Seville. With these powers were combined others of a purely judicial character, authorizing them to take cognizance of questions arising out of particular voyages, and of the colonial trade in general.

Such were the extensive powers intrusted to the famous *Casa de Contratación*, or House of Trade on this its first definite organization.

By a bull of Alexander the Sixth, dated November 16, 1501, the sovereigns were empowered to receive all the tithes in the colonial dominions. Another bull, of Pope Julius the Second, July 28, 1508, granted them the right of collating to all benefices, of whatever description, in the colonies, subject only to the approbation of the Holy See. By these two concessions, the Spanish crown was placed at once at the head of the church in its transatlantic dominions.

The Spanish colonies were from the very first checked and controlled by the over-legislation of the parent country. The original project of discovery had been entered into with indefinite expectations of gain. The Spanish government regarded the expedition as its own private adventure, to whose benefits it had exclusive pretensions. Hence those jealous regulations for securing to itself a monopoly of the most obvious sources of profit, the dyewoods and the precious metals.

It would not be giving a fair view of the great objects proposed by the Spanish sovereigns in their schemes of discovery to omit one which was paramount to all the rest, with the queen at least—the propagation of Christianity among the heathen. She neglected no means for the furtherance of this good work. It was with the design of ameliorating the condition of the natives that she sanctioned the introduction into the colonies of negro slaves born in Spain. This she did on the representation that the physical constitution of the African was much better fitted than that of the Indian to endure severe toil under a tropical climate.

Isabella, however, was destined to have her benevolent designs, in regard to the natives, defeated by her own subjects. The popular doctrine of the absolute rights of the Christian over the heathen seemed to warrant the exaction of labour from these unhappy beings to any degree which avarice on the one hand could demand or human endurance concede on the other. The device of the *repartimientos* systematized and completed the whole scheme of oppression.

While the colonial commerce failed to produce immediately the splendid returns which were expected, it was generally believed to have introduced a physical evil into Europe, the loathsome disease sent as the severest scourge of licentious intercourse between the sexes.

Whatever be the amount of physical good or evil immediately resulting to Spain from her new discoveries, their moral consequences were inestimable. The ancient limits of human thought and action were overleaped. The success of the Spaniards kindled a generous emulation in their Portuguese rivals, who soon after accomplished their long-sought passage into the Indian seas, and thus completed the great circle of maritime discovery.

The discoveries of Columbus occurred most opportunely for the Spanish nation, at the moment when it was released from the tumultuous struggle in which it had been engaged for so many years with the Moslems. The severe schooling of these wars had prepared it for entering on a bolder theatre of action, whose stirring and romantic perils raised still higher the chivalrous spirit of the people. The operation of this spirit was shown in the alacrity with which private adventurers embarked in expeditions to the New World under cover of the general license during the last two years of this century. Their efforts, combined with those of Columbus, extended the range of discovery. Before the end of 1500, the principal groups of the West Indian islands had been visited, and the whole extent of the southern continent coasted, from the Bay of Honduras to Cape St Augustine.

CHAPTER XXVII

ITALIAN WARS—PARTITION OF NAPLES—GONSALVO OVERRUNS CALABRIA—RUPTURE WITH FRANCE—GONSALVO BESIEGED IN BARLETTA

1498–1503

DURING the last four years of our narrative, in which the unsettled state of the kingdom and the progress of foreign discovery appeared to demand the whole attention of the sovereigns, a most important revolution was going forward in the affairs of Italy. The death of Charles the Eighth would seem to have dissolved the relations recently arisen between that country and the rest of Europe.

Louis the Twelfth, on ascending the throne, assumed the titles of Duke of Milan and King of Naples, thus unequivocally announcing his intention of asserting his claims. Unhappily, the court of France found ready instruments for its purpose in the profligate politicians of Italy. The Roman pontiff, in particular, Alexander the Sixth, willingly lent himself to a monarch who could so effectually serve his selfish schemes of building up the fortunes of his family. The ancient republic of Venice consented to unite her arms with those of France against Milan in consideration of a share of the spoils of victory. Florence and many other inferior powers consented either to throw their weight into the same scale, or to remain neutral.

Having thus secured himself from molestation in Italy, Louis the Twelfth entered into negotiations with such other European powers as were most likely to interfere with his designs. The Emperor Maximilian was deeply entangled in a war with the Swiss. The neutrality of Spain was secured by the treaty of Marcoussis, August 5, 1498, which settled all the existing differences with that country. A treaty with Savoy in the following year guaranteed a free passage through her mountain passes into Italy.

Having completed these arrangements, Louis lost no time in mustering his forces, which effected the conquest of the entire duchy in little more than a fortnight. By the conquest of Milan, France now took her place among the Italian powers. Ferdinand the Catholic watched the movements of his powerful neighbour with the deepest anxiety. He had endeavoured, before the invasion of Milan, to awaken the different governments in Italy to a sense of their danger, and to stir them up to some efficient combination against it. These negotiations were resumed after the occupation of Milan by the French, to excite a determined resistance to the proposed aggression on Naples.

The French monarch went briskly forward with his preparations, the object of which he did not affect to conceal. Frederic, the unfortunate king of Naples, saw himself with dismay now menaced with the loss of empire.

The Spanish government, in the meantime, made the most vivid remonstrances through its resident minister, or agents expressly accredited for the purpose, against the proposed expedition of Louis the Twelfth.

Ferdinand now found himself apparently reduced to the alternative of abandoning the prize at once to the French king, or of making battle with him in defence of his royal kinsman. The first of these measures was not to be thought of for a moment. The latter was scarcely more palatable. A third expedient suggested itself, the partition of the kingdom.

Instructions were accordingly given to Gralla, the minister at the court of Paris, to sound the government on this head, bringing it forward as his own private suggestion. The suggestions of the Spanish envoy received additional weight from the report of a considerable armament then equipping in the port of Málaga. The fleet consisted of about sixty sail, and carried forces amounting to six hundred horse and four thousand foot, picked men. The command of the whole was intrusted to the Great Captain, Gonsalvo de Córdova.

Meanwhile, the negotiations between France and Spain, respecting Naples, were brought to a close by a treaty for the equal partition of that kingdom between the two powers, ratified at Granada, November 11, 1500. This extraordinary document proceeds to state that no other prince, save the kings of France and Aragon, can pretend to a title to the throne of Naples. It provided that the northern portion be assigned to France, with the title of King of Naples and Jerusalem, and the southern, consisting of Apulia and Calabria, with the title of duke of those provinces, to Spain. Lastly, any inequality between the respective territories was to be so adjusted that the revenues accruing to each of the parties should be precisely equal. The treaty was to be kept secret until preparations were completed for the simultaneous occupation of the territory by the combined powers.

Before the conferences respecting the treaty were brought to a close, the Spanish armada under Gonsalvo, after a long detention in Sicily, where it was reinforced by two thousand recruits who had been serving as mercenaries in Italy, held its course for the Morea. The Turkish squadron, lying before Napoli di Romania, without waiting Gonsalvo's approach, raised the siege and retreated precipitately to Constantinople. The Spanish general, then uniting his forces with the Venetians stationed at Corfu, proceeded at once against the fortified place of St George, in Cephalonia, which the Turks had lately wrested from the republic.

The town stood high on a rock, in an impregnable position, and was garrisoned by four hundred Turks, all veteran soldiers, prepared to die in its defence. At length, Gonsalvo and the Venetian admiral, Pesaro, resolved on a simultaneous attack on separate quarters of the town. The brave garrison, four-fifths of whom with their commander had fallen, were overpowered, and the victorious banners of St Jago and St Mark were planted side by side triumphantly on the towers.

The capture of this place was of great service to the Venetian cause, since it was the first check given to the arms of Bajazet, who had filched one place after another from the republic, menacing its whole colonial territory in the Levant. The promptness and efficiency of King Ferdinand's succour to the Venetians gained him high reputation throughout Europe, and precisely of the kind which he most coveted, that of being the zealous defender of the faith. The Great Captain returned in the beginning of 1501 to Sicily.

Meanwhile, Louis the Twelfth, having completed his preparations for the invasion of Naples, crossed the Alps. The command of the land forces was given to the Sire d'Aubigny, the same brave and experienced officer who had formerly coped with Gonsalvo in the campaigns of Calabria.

No sooner had D'Aubigny crossed the papal borders than the French and Spanish ambassadors announced to Alexander the Sixth and the college of cardinals the existence of the treaty for the partition of the kingdom between the sovereigns, their masters, requesting his Holiness to confirm it, and grant them the investiture of their respective shares. In this very reasonable petition his Holiness, well drilled in the part he was to play, acquiesced without difficulty.

On July 8th, the French crossed the Neapolitan frontier. Frederic, who had taken post at St Germano, found himself so weak that he was compelled to give way on its approach and retreat on his capital. King Frederic resigned his capital without a blow in its defence, and, retreating to the isle of Ischia, soon after embraced the counsel of the French admiral Ravenstein, to accept a safe-conduct into France and throw himself on the generosity of Louis the Twelfth.

Frederic was the last of the illegitimate branch of Aragon who held the Neopolitan sceptre, a line of princes who accorded that munificent patronage to letters which sheds a ray of glory over the roughest and most turbulent reign.

Early in March, Gonsalvo de Córdova had received his first official intelligence of the partition treaty, and of his own appointment to the post of lieutenant-general of Calabria and Apulia. He felt natural regret at being called to act against a prince whose character he esteemed, and with whom he had once been placed in the most intimate and friendly relations.

The levies assembled at Messina amounted to three hundred heavy-armed, three hundred light horse, and three thousand eight hundred infantry, together with a small body of Spanish veterans, which the Castilian ambassador had collected in Italy. They were in excellent condition, well disciplined and seasoned to all the toils and difficulties of war. On July 5th, the Great Captain landed at Tropea, and commenced the conquest of Calabria. The entire occupation of the two Calabrias, with the exception of Taranto, was effected in less than a month.

This city, remarkable in ancient times for its defence against Hannibal, was of the last importance. It was rendered nearly inaccessible by its natural position, while its exposure to the sea made it easily open to supplies from abroad. Gonsalvo saw that the only method of reducing the place must be by blockade.

The Spanish troops, cooped up within their intrenchments, and disgusted with the languid monotony of their life, cast many a wistful glance at the stirring scenes of war in the centre of Italy, where Caesar Borgia held out magnificent promises of pay and plunder to all who embarked in his adventurous enterprises. In consequence of these inducements, some of Gonsalvo's men were found to desert, while those who remained were becoming more discontented from the large arrears due from the government.

A trivial incident, at this time, swelled the popular discontent into mutiny. The French fleet, after the capture of Naples, was ordered to the Levant to assist the Venetians against the Turks. Ravenstein turned his arms against Mitilene. He totally failed in the attack, and his fleet was soon after scattered by a tempest. He subsequently found his way, with several of his principal officers, to the shores of Calabria, where he landed in the most forlorn and desperate plight. Gonsalvo, touched with his misfortunes, no sooner learned his necessities than he sent him abundant supplies.

This excessive liberality was very inopportune. The soldiers loudly complained that their general found treasures to squander on foreigners, while his own troops were defrauded of their pay. The Biscayans, a people of whom Gonsalvo used to say, 'he had rather be a lion-keeper, than undertake to govern them', took the lead in the tumult. It soon swelled into open insurrection; and the men, forming themselves into regular companies, marched to the general's quarters and demanded payment of their arrears. The insurgents at length were prevailed on to disperse to their quarters.

An unexpected event, which took place at this juncture, contributed to restore subordination to the army. This was the capture of a Genoese galleon with a valuable freight. Gonsalvo ordered the cargo to be disposed of for the satisfaction of his troops.

The unexpected length of the siege of Taranto determined Gonsalvo, at length, to adopt bolder measures for quickening its termination. The city was bounded on the north by [an] arm of the sea, forming an excellent interior harbour about eighteen miles in circumference. The inhabitants, trusting to the natural defences of this quarter, had omitted to protect it by fortifications, and the houses rose abruptly from the margin of the basin. Into this reservoir the Spanish commander resolved to transport such of his vessels then riding in the outer bay as from their size could be conveyed across the narrow isthmus which divided it from the inner.

After incredible toil, twenty of the smallest craft were moved on huge cars and rollers across the intervening land and safely launched on the bosom of the lake. The inhabitants of Taranto saw with consternation the fleet on the quarter where they were the least defended.

The Neapolitan commander perceived it would be impossible to hold out longer without compromising the personal safety of the young prince under his care. He accordingly entered into negotiations for a truce with the Great Captain, during which articles of capitulation were arranged.

On March 1, 1502, the Spanish army took possession, according to agreement, of the city of Taranto; and the duke of Calabria with his suite was permitted to leave it, in order to rejoin his father in France. In the meantime, advices were received from Ferdinand the Catholic instructing Gonsalvo on no account to suffer the young prince to escape from his hands. The general in consequence sent after the duke and commanded him to be arrested and brought back to Taranto. Not long after, he caused him to be sent a prisoner to Spain.

It was hardly to be expected that the partition treaty between France and Spain, made so manifestly in contempt of all good faith, would be maintained any longer than suited the convenience of the respective parties. The immediate cause was the extremely loose language, which assumed such a geographical division of the kingdom into four provinces as did not correspond with any ancient division and still less with the modern, by which the number was multiplied to twelve. It is scarcely possible that language so loose, in a matter requiring mathematical precision, should have been unintentional.

Before Gonsalvo de Córdova had completed the conquest of the southern moiety of the kingdom, and while lying before Taranto, he received intelligence of the occupation by the French of several places, both in the Capitanate and Basilicate. He detached a body of troops for the protection of these countries.

A personal conference between the respective commanders-in-chief led to no better arrangement than that each should retain his present acquisitions till explicit instructions could be received from their respective courts. Hostilities soon broke out along the lines of the two armies, which each nation charged on its opponent.

In the meanwhile, the Spanish court fruitlessly endeavoured to interest the other powers of Europe in its cause, while the whole north of Italy was alive with the bustling preparations of the French, who loudly vaunted their intention of driving their enemy not merely out of Naples, but Sicily itself.

Louis the Twelfth superintended these preparations in person, and, to be near the theatre of operations, crossed the Alps and took up his quarters at Asti. At length, all being in readiness, he brought things to an immediate issue by commanding his general to proclaim war at once against the Spaniards, unless they abandoned the Capitanate in four-and-twenty hours.

The French forces in Naples amounted, according to their own statements, to one thousand men-at-arms, three thousand five hundred French and Lombard, and three thousand Swiss infantry, in addition to the Neapolitan levies raised by the Angevin lords throughout the kingdom.

Notwithstanding the small numbers of the French force, the Great Captain was in no condition to cope with them. He had received no reinforcements from home since he first landed in Calabria. His little corps of veterans was destitute of proper clothing and equipment, and the large arrears due them made the tenure of their obedience extremely precarious. The French officers, meantime, were divided in opinion as to the best mode of conducting the war.

One of the first operations of the French viceroy was the siege of Canosa, a strongly fortified place west of Barletta. After the capture of Canosa, D'Aubigny was despatched with a small force into the south, to overrun the two Calabrias.

The war now began to assume many of the romantic features of that of Granada. The knights on both sides, not content with the usual military rencontres, defied one another to jousts and tourneys, eager to establish their prowess in the noble exercises of chivalry. In these jousts and tourneys, described with sufficient prolixity, but in a truly heart-stirring tone, by the chroniclers of the day, we may discern the last gleams of the light of chivalry.

While the Spaniards, cooped up within the old town of Barletta, sought to vary the monotony of their existence by these chivalrous exercises, or an occasional foray into the neighbouring country, they suffered greatly from the want of military stores, food, clothing, and the most common necessaries of life. It seemed as if their master had abandoned them. Gonsalvo was not wanting to himself in this trying emergency, and his noble spirit seemed to rise as all outward and visible resources failed. He cheered his troops with promises of speedy relief.

At this time he received the unwelcome tidings that a small force which had been sent from Spain to his assistance was surprised by D'Aubigny near Terranova, and totally defeated. This disaster was followed by the reduction of all Calabria, which the latter general, at the head of his French and Scottish gendarmerie, rode over from one extremity to the other without opposition.

The prospect now grew darker and darker around the little garrison of Barletta. Gonsalvo, however, maintained the same unruffled cheerfulness as before, and endeavoured to infuse it into the hearts of others. But neither the excellence of his troops nor the resources of his own genius would have been sufficient to extricate Gonsalvo from the difficulties of his situation, without the most flagrant errors on the part of his opponent. Such an occasion at length offered itself early in the following year.

The French, no less weary than their adversaries of their long inaction, sallied out from Canosa, where the viceroy had established his headquarters, and, crossing the Ofanto, marched up directly under the walls of Barletta, with the intention of drawing out the garrison from the 'old den,' as they called it, and deciding the quarrel in a pitched battle. At length, Nemours, after remaining some days, and finding there was no chance of decoying his wily foe from his defences, broke up his camp and retired, satisfied with the empty honours of his gasconade.

No sooner had he fairly turned his back than Gonsalvo ordered the whole strength of his cavalry under the command of Diego de Mendoza, flanked by two corps of infantry, to issue forth and pursue the French. Some made resistance, but most sought only to escape; a few effected it, but the greater part of those who did not fall on the field were carried prisoners to Barletta.

The arrival of a Venetian trader at this time, with a cargo of grain, brought temporary relief to the pressing necessities of the garrison. This was followed by the welcome intelligence of the total discomfiture of the French fleet by the Spanish in an action off Otranto. In a few days a convoy of seven transports, laden with grain, meat, and other stores, came safe into Barletta, and supplied abundant means for recruiting the health and spirits of its famished inmates.

Thus restored, the Spaniards began to look forward with eager confidence to the achievement of some new enterprise. The temerity of the viceroy soon afforded an opportunity. The people of Castellaneta, a town near Taranto, were driven by the insolent and licentious behaviour of the French garrison to betray the place into the hands of the Spaniards. The duke of Nemours, enraged at this defection, prepared to march at once with his whole force, and take signal vengeance on the little town; and this, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his officers against a step which must inevitably expose the unprotected garrisons in the neighbourhood to the assault of their vigilant enemy in Barletta.

No sooner had Gonsalvo learned the departure of Nemours on a distant expedition than he resolved at once to make an attack on the town of Ruvo, about twelve miles distant. With his usual promptness, the Spanish general quitted the walls of Barletta the same night on which he received the news.

The assailants experienced more resolute resistance than they had anticipated from the inconsiderable number of the garrison. The brave little garrison were driven before them, still, however, occasionally making fight in the streets and houses. After a short time spent in gathering up the booty and securing his prisoners, the Spanish general, having achieved the object of his expedition, set out on his homeward march, and arrived without interruption at Barletta.

The capture of Ruvo was attended with important consequences to the Spaniards. Besides a valuable booty of clothes, jewels, and money, they brought back with them nearly a thousand horses, which furnished Gonsalvo with the means of augmenting his cavalry, the small number of which had hitherto materally crippled his operations. He accordingly selected seven hundred of his best troops and mounted them on the French horses, thus providing himself with a corps burning with zeal to approve itself worthy of the distinguished honour conferred on it.

A few weeks after, the general received an important accession of strength from the arrival of two thousand German mercenaries, which Don Juan Manuel, the Spanish minister at the Austrian court, had been permitted to raise in the emperor's dominions. This event determined the Great Captain on a step which he had been some time meditating. The new levies placed him in a condition for assuming the offensive. His stock of provisions, moreover, already much reduced, would be obviously insufficient long to maintain his increased numbers. He resolved, therefore, to sally out of the old walls of Barletta, and, availing himself of the high spirits in which the late successes had put his troops, to bring the enemy at once to battle.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ITALIAN WARS—NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—VICTORY OF CERIGNOLA—SURRENDER OF NAPLES

1503

IN the latter part of 1501, Philip and Joanna, attended by a numerous suite of Flemish courtiers, set out on their journey, proposing to take their way through France. They were entertained with profuse magnificence and hospitality at the French court. After some weeks passed in a succession of splendid fêtes and amusements at Blois, the royal pair resumed their journey towards Spain, which they entered by the way of Fontarabia, January 29, 1502. Brilliant fêtes and illuminations, and all the usual marks of public rejoicing, greeted their progress through the principal cities of the north.

The archduke and his wife received the usual oaths of fealty from the cortes duly convoked for the purpose at Toledo. King Ferdinand made a journey into Aragon in order to prepare the way for a similar recognition by the estates of that realm. Philip and Joanna, having ascertained the favourable disposition of cortes, made their entrance in great state into the ancient city of Saragossa, in the month of October. On the 27th, Joanna as future queen proprietor, and Philip as her husband, were solemnly recognised by the four *arms* of Aragon as successors to the crown, in default of male issue of King Ferdinand. The circumstance is memorable as affording the first example of the parliamentary recognition of a female heir apparent in Aragonese history.

Ferdinand and Isabella saw with regret the frivolous disposition of their son-in-law, who, in the indulgence of selfish and effeminate ease, was willing to repose on others all the important duties of government. They beheld with mortification his indifference to Joanna, who could boast few personal attractions.

Shortly after the ceremony at Saragossa, the archduke announced his intention of an immediate return to the Netherlands, by way of France. The sovereigns, astonished at this abrupt determination, used every argument to dissuade him from it. All arguments were ineffectual. The inflexible prince, turning a deaf ear alike to the entreaties of his unhappy wife and the remonstrances of the Aragonese cortes still in session, set out from Madrid, with the whole of his Flemish suite, in the month of December.

Before his departure for France, Philip, anxious to re-establish harmony between that country and Spain, offered his services to his father-in-law in negotiating with Louis the Twelfth, if possible, a settlement of the differences respecting Naples. Ferdinand showed some reluctance at intrusting so delicate a commission to an envoy in whose discretion he placed small reliance. Before the archduke had crossed the frontier, however, he was overtaken by a Spanish ecclesiastic who brought full powers to Philip from the king for concluding a treaty with France. He was enjoined to take no step without the advice of his reverend coadjutor, and to inform the Spanish court at once, if different propositions were submitted from those contemplated by his instructions.

Thus fortified, the archduke Philip made his appearance at the French court in Lyons, where he was received by Louis with the same lively expressions of regard as before. With these amiable dispositions, the negotiations were not long in resulting in a definite treaty.

The treaty, which was signed at Lyons, April 5, 1503, was arranged on the basis of the marriage of Charles, the infant son of Philip, and Claude, princess of France, a marriage which, settled by three several treaties, was destined never to take place. The royal infants were immediately to assume the titles of King and Queen of Naples, and Duke and Duchess of Calabria. Until the consummation of the marriage, the French division of the kingdom was to be placed under the administration of some suitable person named by Louis the Twelfth, and the Spanish under that of the archduke Philip, or some other deputy appointed by Ferdinand. All places unlawfully seized by either party were to be restored; and lastly it was settled, with regard to the disputed province of the Capitanate, that the portion held by the French should be governed by an agent of King Louis, and the Spanish by the archduke Philip on behalf of Ferdinand.

At the same time, the French king countermanded the embarkation of fresh troops on board a fleet equipping at the port of Genoa for Naples, and sent orders to his generals in Italy to desist from further operations. The archduke forwarded similar instructions to Gonsalvo, accompanied with a copy of the powers intrusted to him by Ferdinand. That prudent officer, however, whether in obedience to previous directions from the king, as Spanish writers affirm, or on his own responsibility, from a very natural sense of duty, refused to comply with the ambassador's orders, declaring 'he knew no authority but that of his own sovereigns, and that he felt bound to prosecute the war with all his ability, till he received their commands to the contrary'.

Without further delay, he put his purpose into execution, and on Friday, April 28th, marched out with his whole army from the ancient walls of Barletta. The road lay across the field of Cannae, where, seventeen centuries before, the pride of Rome had been humbled by the victorious arms of Hannibal.

The whole army arrived early in the afternoon before Cerignola, a small town on an eminence about sixteen miles from Barletta, where the nature of the ground afforded the Spanish general a favourable position for his camp. The sloping sides of the hill were covered with vineyards, and its base was protected by a ditch of considerable depth. Gonsalvo saw at once the advantages of the ground. All hands were put in requisition for widening the trench, in which they planted sharp-pointed stakes, while the earth which they excavated enabled them to throw up a parapet of considerable height on the side next the town. On this rampart he mounted his little train of artillery, consisting of thirteen guns, and behind it drew up his forces in order of battle.

Before these movements were completed in the Spanish camp, the bright arms and banners of the French were seen glistening in the distance amid the tall fennel and cane-brakes with which the country was thickly covered. As soon as they had come in view of the Spanish encampment, they were brought to a halt, while a council of war was called to determine the expediency of giving battle that evening.

While this was going on, Gonsalvo gained time for making the necessary disposition of his troops. In the centre he placed his German auxiliaries, armed with their long pikes, and on each wing the Spanish infantry. The artillery was committed to the left wing. A considerable body of men-at-arms, including those recently equipped from the spoils of Ruvo, was drawn up within the intrenchments, in a quarter affording a convenient opening for a sally. The light cavalry was posted without the lines to annoy the advance of the enemy, and act on any point, as occasion might require. Having completed his preparations, the Spanish general coolly waited the assault of the French.

The duke of Nemours had marshalled his forces in a very different order. He distributed them into three divisions, stationing his heavy horse on the right. The second and centre division, formed somewhat in the rear of the right, was made up of the Swiss and Gascon infantry, and his left, consisting chiefly of his light cavalry, drawn up, like the last, somewhat in the rear of the preceding.

It was within half an hour of sunset when the duke de Nemours gave orders for the attack. The hostile armies were nearly equal. The French were superior in their cavalry, while Gonsalvo's strength lay chiefly in his infantry.

The French van, advancing rapidly, were unexpectedly brought up by the deep trench, of whose existence they were unapprized. Some of the horse precipitated into it, and all received a sudden check, until Nemours, finding it impossible to force the works in this quarter, rode along their front in search of some practicable passage. In doing this, he necessarily exposed his flank to the fatal aim of the Spanish arquebusiers. He fell mortally wounded from his saddle.

At this juncture, the Swiss and Gascon infantry, briskly moving up to second the attack of the now disordered horse, arrived before the intrenchments. Undismayed by this formidable barrier, their commander, Chandieu, made the most desperate attempts to force a passage; but the loose earth freshly turned up afforded no hold to the feet, and his men were compelled to recoil. Chandieu made every effort to rally and bring them back to the charge, but, in the act of doing this, was hit by a ball, which stretched him lifeless in the ditch.

All was now confusion. At this critical moment, Gonsalvo ordered a general charge along the line. The Spaniards, leaping their intrenchments, descended with the fury of an avalanche on their foes, whose wavering columns, completely broken by the violence of the shock, were seized with panic, and fled, scarcely offering any resistance.

More than three thousand French are computed by the best accounts to have fallen. The loss of the Spaniards, covered as they were by their defences, was inconsiderable. Never was there a more complete victory achieved within the space of little more than an hour. Allègre, finding the gates shut against him wherever he passed, at length took shelter in Gaeta on the extreme point of the Neapolitan territory.

The day after the battle of Cerignola the Spaniards received tidings of another victory, scarcely less important, gained over the French in Calabria the preceding week. The star of France was on the wane.

The Great Captain and his army, highly elated with the news of this fortunate event, which annihilated the French power in Calabria, began their march on Naples. The tidings of the victory had spread far and wide; and, as Gonsalvo's army advanced, they beheld the ensigns of Aragon floating from the battlements of the towns upon their route, while the inhabitants came forth to greet the conqueror, eager to testify their devotion to the Spanish cause. The army halted at Benevento; and the general sent his summons to the city of Naples, inviting it in the most courteous terms to resume its ancient allegiance to the legitimate branch of Aragon. With the same ductile enthusiasm with which they greeted the accession of Charles the Eighth or Louis the Twelfth, they now welcomed the restoration of the ancient dynasty of Aragon.

Gonsalvo, on the following morning, May 14, 1503, made his entrance in great state into the capital. On the following day a deputation of the nobility and people waited on the Great Captain at his quarters, and tendered him the usual oaths of allegiance for his master, King Ferdinand, whose accession finally closed the series of revolutions which had so long agitated this unhappy country.

After some weeks of protracted operations, Gonsalvo, having obtained funds from Spain for paying off his men, quitted the capital and directed his march on Gaeta. The important results of his victories were now fully disclosed. D'Aubigny, with the wreck of the forces escaped from Seminara, had surrendered. The two Abruzzi, the Capitanate, all the Basilicate, except Venosa, still held by Louis d'Ars, and indeed every considerable place in the kingdom had tendered its submission, with the exception of Gaeta. The Great Captain resolved to concentrate all his strength on this point, designing to press the siege and thus exterminate at a blow the feeble remains of the French power in Italy. The enterprise was attended with more difficulty than he had anticipated.

CHAPTER XXIX

NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—UNSUCCESSFUL INVASION OF SPAIN—TRUCE

1503

THE Spanish writers say that before the news of Gonsalvo's successes reached Spain, King Ferdinand refused to confirm the treaty sent him by his son-in-law, until it had undergone certain material modifications. If the Spanish monarch hesitated to approve the treaty in the doubtful posture of his affairs, he was little likely to do so when he had the game entirely in his own hands.

If this were the case, the propriety of Ferdinand's conduct in refusing the ratification depends on the question how far a sovereign is bound by the acts of a plenipotentiary who departs from his private instructions.

Whatever be thought of Ferdinand's good faith in the early stages of this business, there is no doubt that, at a later period, when his position was changed by the success of his arms in Italy, he sought only to amuse the French court with a show of negotiation, in order to paralyse its operations and gain time for securing his conquests.

While Ferdinand was thus triumphant in his schemes of foreign policy and conquest, his domestic life was clouded with the deepest anxiety, in consequence of the declining health of the queen, and the eccentric conduct of his daughter, the infanta Joanna. We have already seen the extravagant fondness with which that princess, notwithstanding her occasional sallies of jealousy, doated on her young and handsome husband. From the hour of his departure she had been plunged in the deepest dejection, sitting day and night with her eyes fixed on the ground, in uninterrupted silence, or broken only by occasional expressions of petulant discontent.

On March 10, 1503, she was delivered of her second son, who received the baptismal name of Ferdinand, in compliment to his grandfather. No change, however, took place in the mind of the unfortunate mother, who from this time was wholly occupied with the project of returning to Flanders. An invitation to that effect, which she received from her husband in November, determined her to undertake the journey, at all hazards, notwithstanding the affectionate remonstrances of the queen, who represented the impracticability of traversing France, agitated, as it then was, with all the bustle of warlike preparation, or of venturing by sea at this inclement and stormy season.

One evening, while her mother was absent at Segovia, Joanna, whose residence was at Medina del Campo, left her apartment in the castle, and sallied out, though in dishabille, without announcing her purpose to any of her attendants. They followed, however, and used every argument and entreaty to prevail on her to return, at least for the night, but without effect. The bishop of Burgos, who had charge of her household, finding every other means ineffectual, was compelled to close the castle gates, in order to prevent her departure.

The princess, thus thwarted in her purpose, gave way to the most violent indignation. She menaced the attendants with her utmost vengeance for their disobedience. Taking her station on the barrier, she obstinately refused to re-enter the castle, or even to put on any additional clothing, but remained cold and shivering on the spot till the following morning. These were the first unequivocal symptoms of that hereditary taint of insanity which had clouded the latter days of Isabella's mother, and which, with a few brief intervals, was to shed a deeper gloom over the long-protracted existence of her unfortunate daughter.

The conviction of this sad infirmity of the princess gave a shock to the unhappy mother, scarcely less than that which she had formerly been called to endure in the death of her children. These domestic griefs were still further swelled at this time by the death of two of her ancient friends and counsellors, Juan Chacón, adelantado of Murcia, and Gutierre de Cárdenas, grand commander of León. They had attached themselves to Isabella in the early part of her life, when her fortunes were still under a cloud.

But neither the domestic troubles which pressed so heavily on Isabella's heart, nor the rapidly declining state of her own health, had power to blunt the energies of her mind, or lessen the vigilance with which she watched over the interests of her people. A remarkable proof of this was given in the autumn of 1503, when the country was menaced with an invasion from France.

The whole French nation had shared the indignation of Louis the Twelfth at the mortifying result of his enterprise against Naples; and it answered his call for supplies so promptly and liberally that, in a few months after the defeat of Cerignola, he was able to resume operations on a more formidable scale than France had witnessed for centuries. Three large armies were raised, one to retrieve affairs in Italy, a second to penetrate into Spain, by the way of Fontarabia, and a third to cross into Roussillon, and get possession of the strong post of Salsas, the key of the mountain passes in that quarter. Two fleets were also equipped in the ports of Genoa and Marseilles, the latter of which was to support the invasion of Roussillon by a descent on the coast of Catalonia. These various corps were intended to act in concert, and thus, by one grand, simultaneous movement, Spain was to be assailed on three several points of her territory.

The army destined to march on Fontarabia, exhausted by fatigue and want of food, melted away without even reaching the enemy's borders.

The force directed against Roussillon was of a more formidable character. It amounted to more than twenty thousand men, the undisciplined militia from the great towns of Languedoc. With this numerous array the French entered Roussillon without opposition, and sat down before Salsas on September 16, 1503.

Ferdinand, in the meanwhile, lost no time in enforcing levies throughout the kingdom. While thus occupied, he received such accounts of the queen's indisposition as induced him to quit Aragon, where he then was, and hasten to Castile. He found no cause for immediate alarm on his arrival, and Isabella persuaded him to return to the scene of operations, where his presence at this juncture was so important. Ferdinand, whose headquarters were established at Gerona, saw himself in less than a month in possession of a force which, including the supplies of Aragon, amounted to ten or twelve thousand horse, and three or four times that number of foot. He no longer delayed his march, and about the middle of October put his army in motion, proposing to effect a junction with the duke of Alva, then lying before Perpignan, at a few leagues distance from Salsas.

King Ferdinand reached Perpignan on October 19th, and on that same night the French marshal, finding himself unequal to the rencontre with the combined forces of Spain, broke camp, and, setting fire to his tents, began his retreat towards the frontier, having consumed nearly six weeks since first opening trenches. Ferdinand pressed close on his flying enemy. The retreat, however, was conducted in too good order to allow any material loss to be inflicted on the French. Several places on the frontier, as Leocate, Palme, Sigean, Roquefort, and others, were abandoned to the Spaniards, who pillaged them.

The Spanish monarch made no attempt to retain these acquisitions; but having dismantled some of the towns, which offered most resistance, returned loaded with the spoils of victory to his own dominions.

His good star still further favoured him. The armada, equipped at so much cost by the French king at Marseilles, had no sooner put to sea than it was assailed by furious temptests, and so far crippled that it was obliged to return to port without even effecting a descent on the Spanish coast.

These accumulated disasters so disheartened Louis the Twelfth that he consented to enter into negotiations for a suspension of hostilities. An armistice was finally arranged, through the mediation of his pensioner Frederic, ex-king of Naples, between the hostile monarchs. It extended only to their hereditary dominions, Italy and the circumjacent seas being still left open as a common arena on which the rival parties might meet and settle their respective titles by the sword. This truce, first concluded for five months, was subsequently prolonged to three years. It gave Ferdinand what he most needed, leisure and means to provide for the security of his Italian possessions.

The results of this campaign were as honourable to Spain as they were disastrous and humiliating to Louis the Twelfth. The immediate success of Spain may be ascribed, in a considerable degree, to the improved organization and thorough discipline introduced by the sovereigns into the national militia at the close of the Moorish war. Instead of the narrow local jealousies which had so long estranged the people of the separate provinces, and more especially those of the rival states of Aragon and Castile, from one another, there had been gradually raised up a common national sentiment. Such was the consequence of the glorious union which brought together the petty and hitherto discordant tribes of the Peninsula under the same rule, and, by creating common interests and an harmonious principle of action, was silently preparing them for constituting one great nation.

CHAPTER XXX

ITALIAN WARS—CONDITION OF ITALY—FRENCH AND SPANISH ARMIES ON THE GARIGLIANO—ROUT OF THE GARIGLIANO—TREATY WITH FRANCE—GONSALVO'S MILITARY CONDUCT

1503–1504

WE must now turn towards Italy, where the sounds of war were again heard. The period before us, the commencement of the sixteenth century, was that of meridian splendour, when Italian genius shone out in full effulgence, for we are now touching on the age of Machiavelli, Ariosto, and Michelangelo—the golden age of Leo the Tenth.

It was the old story of the Goths and Vandals acted over again. Those more refined arts of the cabinet, on which the Italians were accustomed to rely much more than on the sword in their disputes with one another, were of no avail against these rude invaders. It was the triumph of brute force over civilization.

Had there been an invigorating national feeling, any common principle of coalition among the Italian states, they possessed abundant resources in their wealth, talent, and superior science to have shielded their soil from violation. Unfortunately, while the other European states had been augmenting their strength incalculably by the consolidation of their scattered fragments into one whole, those of Italy, in the absence of some great central point round which to rally, had grown more and more confirmed in their original disunion.

The great powers, who had now entered the lists, created entirely new interests in Italy, which broke up the old political combinations. The conquest of Milan enabled France to assume a decided control over the affairs of the country. Her recent reverses in Naples, however, had greatly loosened this authority, although Florence and other neighbouring states still remained true to her. Venice, with her usual crafty policy, kept aloof, maintaining a position of neutrality between the belligerents.

The disposition of the papal court towards the French monarch was still less favourable; and it took no pains to conceal this after his reverses in

Naples. With the emperor Maximilian, notwithstanding repeated treaties, he was on scarcely better terms.

But while Louis the Twelfth drew so little assistance from abroad, the heartiness with which the whole French people entered into his feelings at this crisis made him nearly independent of it, and, in an incredibly short space of time, placed him in a condition for resuming operations on a far more formidable scale than before. He equipped without loss of time a large armament at Genoa, under the marquis of Saluzzo, for the relief of Gaeta, still blockaded by the Spaniards. The whole force, exclusive of that employed permanently in the fleet, is variously computed from twenty to thirty thousand men. In July, the army was on its march across the broad plains of Lombardy, but, on reaching Parma, the appointed place of rendezvous for the Swiss and Italian mercenaries, was brought to a halt by tidings of the death of Pope Alexander the Sixth.

The pope's death was attended with important consequences on the movements of the French. Louis's favourite minister, Cardinal D'Amboise, had long looked to this event as opening to him the succession to the tiara. The army, accordingly, was ordered to advance towards Rome, and halt within a few miles of its gates. The conclave of cardinals filled with indignation at this attempt to overawe their election.

At length Cardinal D'Amboise consented to the removal of the French forces from the neighbourhood, and trusted for success to his personal influence. He over-estimated its weight. On the departure of the French, the suffrages of the conclave fell on an Italian who assumed the name of Pius the Third, and who justified the policy of the choice by dying in less time than his best friends had anticipated—within a month after his elevation.

The new vacancy was at once supplied by the election of Julius the Second, the belligerent pontiff who made his tiara a helmet, and his crosier a sword. No sooner had the election of Pius the Third been publicly announced than the French army was permitted to resume its march on Naples, after the loss—an irreparable loss—of more than a month.

The Spanish commander, meanwhile, was detained before the strong post of Gaeta, into which Ives d'Allègre had thrown himself with the fugitives from the field of Cerignola, where he had been subsequently reinforced by four thousand additional troops under the marquis of Saluzzo. From these circumstances, as well as the great strength of the place, Gonsalvo experienced an opposition, to which, of late, he had been wholly unaccustomed. He was still occupied with the blockade of Gaeta when he received intelligence that the French had crossed the Tiber and were in full march against him.

While Gonsalvo lay before Gaeta, he had been intent on collecting such reinforcements as he could from every quarter. With all this, however, a heavy amount of arrears remained due to his troops. In point of numbers he was still far inferior to the enemy, no computation swelling them higher than three thousand horse, two of them light cavalry, and nine thousand foot. The strength of his army lay in his Spanish infantry. His only resource was to get possession of some pass or strong position which lay in their route, where he might detain them till the arrival of further reinforcements should enable him to face them on more equal terms. The deep stream of the Garigliano presented such a line of defence as he wanted.

On October 6th, therefore, the Great Captain broke camp and, abandoning the whole region north of the Garigliano to the enemy, struck into the interior of the country, and took post at San Germano.

It was not long before the columns of the latter were descried in full march on Ponte Corvo, on the opposite side of the Garigliano. After a brief halt there, they traversed the bridge before that place. The garrison of Rocca Secca, against which they directed their arms, handled them so roughly that, after in vain endeavouring to carry the place in two desperate assaults, the marquis of Mantua resolved to abandon the attempt altogether, and recrossing the river, to seek a more practicable point for his purpose lower down.

Keeping along the right bank, therefore, to the south-east of the mountains of Fondi, he descended nearly to the mouth of the Garigliano. The ground now occupied by the armies was low and swampy. Its natural humidity was greatly increased, at this time, by the excessive rains which began earlier and with much more violence than usual.

The marquis of Mantua prepared to throw a bridge across at a point not far from Trajetto. He succeeded in it, notwithstanding the swollen and troubled condition of the waters. The bridge was constructed of boats, strongly secured together and covered with planks.

The work being completed, on November 6th the army advanced upon the bridge, supported by such a lively cannonade from the batteries along the shore as made all resistance on the part of the Spaniards ineffectual. The impetuosity with which the French rushed forward was such as to drive the advanced guard of their enemy, which, giving way in disorder, retreated on the main body. Before the confusion could extend further, Gonsalvo rode through the broken ranks and, rallying the fugitives, quickly brought them to order. Navarro and Andrada, at the same time, led up the Spanish infantry.

The struggle now became desperate, officers and soldiers, horse and foot, mingling together and fighting hand to hand, with all the ferocity kindled by close personal combat. It was a contest of mere bodily strength and courage, in which skill and superior tactics were of little avail.

The French, notwithstanding they remained masters of the contested bridge, had met with a resistance which greatly discouraged them; and, instead of attempting to push their success further, retired that same evening to their quarters on the other side of the river. The tempestuous weather, which continued with unabated fury, had now broken up the roads and converted the soil into a morass nearly impracticable for the movements of horse, and quite so for those of artillery, on which the French chiefly relied, while it interposed comparatively slight obstacles to the manoeuvres of infantry, which constituted the strength of the Spaniards. From a consideration of these circumstances, the French commander resolved not to resume active operations till a change of weather.

It seemed now obvious that victory must declare for that party which could best endure the hardships and privations of its present situation. The position of the Spaniards was far more unfavourable than that of the enemy. The Great Captain, soon after the affair of the bridge, had drawn off his forces to a rising ground about a mile from the river, which was crowned by the little hamlet of Cintura and commanded the route to Naples. In front of his camp he sunk a deep trench, which speedily filled with water; and he garnished it at each extremity with a strong redoubt. Securely intrenched, he resolved patiently to await the movements of the enemy.

The situation of the army, in the meantime, was indeed deplorable. Those who occupied the lower level were up to their knees in mud and water, for the excessive rains and the inundation of the Garigliano had converted the whole country into a mere quagmire, or rather standing pool. Those on the higher grounds were scarcely in better plight. In addition, the soldiers were badly fed and badly paid.

In this difficult crisis Gonsalvo de Córdova retained all his usual equanimity, and even the cheerfulness so indispensable in a leader who would infuse heart into his followers. Above all, he displayed that inflexible constancy which enables the strong mind in the hour of darkness and peril to buoy up the sinking spirits around it.

Gonsalvo confided in the prudence, sobriety, and excellent constitution of the Spaniards for resisting the bad effects of the climate. He relied too on their tried discipline and their devotion to himself. His experience at

Barletta led him to anticipate results of a very opposite character with the French troops.

The French occupied higher and more healthy ground on the other side of the Garigliano. They were fortunate enough also to find more effectual protection from the weather in the remains of a spacious amphitheatre and some other edifices, which still covered the site of Minturnae. With all this, however, they suffered more severely from the inclement season than their robust adversaries. Numbers daily sickened and died. They were much straitened, moreover, from want of provisions. Thus situated, the fiery spirits of the French soldiery gradually sunk.

At length the latent mass of disaffection found an object on which to vent itself, in the person of their commander-in-chief, the marquis of Mantua, never popular with the French soldiers. They loaded him with the opprobrious epithets with which Transalpine insolence was accustomed to stigmatize the Italians. At length the latter availed himself of a temporary illness to throw up his commission, and withdrew abruptly to his own estates.

The Italians, disgusted with the treatment of their former chief, deserted in great numbers. The great body of the French chivalry dispersed among the adjacent cities of Fondi, Itri, and Gaeta. Thus, while the whole Spanish army lay within a mile of the river, under the immediate eye of their commander, prepared for instant service, the French were scattered over a country more than ten miles in extent.

Seven weeks had now elapsed, since the two armies had lain in sight of each other without any decided movement on either side. During this time, the Great Captain had made repeated efforts to strengthen himself by reinforcements from Rome. Bartolomeo d'Alviano agreed to enlist under the Spanish commander with three thousand men.

The appearance of this corps, with one of the most able and valiant of the Italian captains at its head, revived the drooping spirits of the camp. Soon after his arrival, Alviano strongly urged Gonsalvo to abandon his original plan of operations and avail himself of his augmented strength to attack the enemy in his own quarters. The cautious general acquiesced in Alviano's project to cross the Garigliano. The attack was fixed as soon as possible after the approaching Christmas, when the French, occupied with the festivities of the season, might be thrown off their guard.

On December 28th all was in readiness for carrying the plan of attack into execution. The task of laying the bridge across the river was intrusted to Alviano, who had charge of the van. The central and main division of the army under Gonsalvo was to cross at the same point, while Andrada at the head of the rearguard was to force a passage at the old bridge, lower down the stream, opposite to the Tower of the Garigliano.

The night was dark and stormy. Alviano performed the duty intrusted to him with such silence and celerity that the work was completed without attracting the enemy's notice. He then crossed over with the vanguard, consisting chiefly of cavalry.

The French commander-in-chief lost no time, however, in rallying such of his scattered forces as he could assemble, and in the meanwhile despatched Ives d'Allègre with a body of horse to hold the enemy in check, till he could make good his own retreat on Gaeta.

Gonsalvo, afraid the French might escape him, sent forward Prospero Colonna with a corps of light horse to annoy and retard their march until he could come up. At every bridge, stream, and narrow pass which afforded a favourable position, the French cavalry closed their ranks and made a resolute stand to gain time for the columns in advance.

In this way, alternately halting and retreating, with perpetual skirmishes, though without much loss on either side, they reached the bridge before Mola di Gaeta. A desperate struggle ensued. The French knights dashed boldly into the Spanish ranks, driving back for a time the tide of pursuit.

The Spaniards, shaken by the violence of the assault, seemed for a moment to hesitate; but Gonsalvo had now time to bring up his men-at-arms, who sustained the faltering columns and renewed the combat on more equal terms. He himself was in the hottest of the mêlée.

The Spaniards, although still in excellent heart, were faint with fatigue and want of food. It was, therefore, with no little anxiety that Gonsalvo looked for the coming up of his rearguard, under Andrada, to decide the fortune of the day. The greater part of those who escaped the sword succeeded in throwing themselves into Gaeta.

Thus terminated the battle, or rout, as it is commonly called, of the Garigliano, the most important in its results of all Gonsalvo's victories. The loss of the French is computed at from three to four thousand men, left dead on the field, together with all their baggage, colours, and splendid train of artillery.

Early on the following morning, Gonsalvo made preparations for storming the heights of mount Orlando, which overlooked the city of Gaeta. Such was the despondency of its garrison, however, that this strong position was now surrendered without a struggle. The same feeling of despondency had communicated itself to the garrison of Gaeta; and, before Navarro could bring the batteries of mount Orlando to bear upon the city, a flag of truce arrived from the marquis of Saluzzo with proposals for capitulation.

It was agreed by the terms of capitulation, January 1, 1504, that the French should evacuate Gaeta at once and deliver it up to the Spaniards with its artillery, munitions, and military stores of every description. The prisoners on both sides were to be restored; and the army in Gaeta was to be allowed a free passage by land or sea to their own country. The news of the rout of the Garigliano and the surrender of Gaeta diffused general gloom and consternation over France.

On January 3, 1504, Gonsalvo made his entry into Gaeta. After a short delay for the refreshment of his troops, he set out for the capital.

The first business of Gonsalvo was to call together the different orders of the state, and receive their oaths of allegiance to King Ferdinand. He next occupied himself with the necessary arrangements for the reorganization of the government, and for reforming various abuses which had crept into the administration of justice. In these attempts to introduce order, he was not a little thwarted, however, by the insubordination of his own soldiery. They loudly clamoured for the discharge of the arrears, still shamefully protracted, till, their discontents swelling to open mutiny, they forcibly seized on two of the principal places in the kingdom as security for the payment. Gonsalvo chastised their insolence by disbanding several of the most refractory companies, and sending them home for punishment. He endeavoured to relieve them in part by raising contributions from the Neapolitans.

Amidst his manifold duties, Gonsalvo did not forget the gallant officers who had borne with him the burdens of the war. He requited their services in a princely style. He made them grants of cities, fortresses, and extensive lands, according to their various claims, to be held as fiefs of the crown. All this was done with the previous sanction of his royal master, Ferdinand the Catholic. They did some violence, however, to his more economical spirit, and he was heard somewhat peevishly to exclaim, 'It boots little for Gonsalvo de Córdova to have won a kingdom for me, if he lavishes it all away before it comes into my hands'. It began to be perceived at court that the Great Captain was too powerful for a subject.

Meanwhile, Louis the Twelfth was filled with serious apprehensions for the fate of his possessions in the north of Italy. The apprehension answered Ferdinand's purpose by preparing the French monarch to arrange his differences with his rival, as the latter now earnestly desired, by negotiation.

A treaty was concluded, to continue for three years, which guaranteed to Aragon the undisturbed possession of her conquests during that period. The chief articles provided for the immediate cessation of hostilities between the belligerents, and re-establishment of their commercial relations and intercourse, with the exception of Naples, from which the French were to be excluded. The treaty was to run from February 25, 1504.

The pacification of Lyons sealed the fate of Naples, and closed the military career of Gonsalvo de Córdova. It is impossible to contemplate the magnitude of the results, achieved with such slender resources, and in the face of such overwhelming odds, without deep admiration for the genius of the man by whom they were accomplished.

His success, it is true, is imputable in part to the signal errors of his adversaries. If his enemies, however, committed great errors, it is altogether owing to Gonsalvo that he was in a situation to take advantage of them. Nothing could be more unpromising than his position on first entering Calabria.

He lost his first battle, into which he was precipitated against his will. He proceeded afterwards with the greatest caution. He put himself to school during this whole campaign, carefully acquainting himself with the tactics, discipline, and novel arms of his adversaries, and borrowing just so much as he could incorporate into the ancient system of the Spaniards, without discarding the latter altogether. Thus, while he retained the short sword and buckler of his countrymen, he fortified his battalions with a large number of spearmen, after the German fashion.

While Gonsalvo made innovation in arms and tactics, he paid equal attention to the formation of a suitable character in his soldiery. The circumstances in which he was placed at Barletta, and on the Garigliano, imperatively demanded this. He infused into his men a portion of his own invincible energy. He inspired a love of his person, which led them to emulate his example, and a confidence in his genius and resources which supported them.

In a review of his military conduct, we must not overlook his politic deportment towards the Italians, altogether the reverse of the careless and insolent bearing of the French.

The distance of Gonsalvo's theatre of operations from his own country, apparently most discouraging, proved extremely favourable to his purposes. The troops, cut off from retreat by a wide sea and an impassable mountain barrier, had no alternative but to conquer, or to die. Their long continuance in the field without disbanding gave them all the stern, inflexible qualities of a standing army; and, as they served through so many successive campaigns under the banner of the same leader, they were drilled in a system of tactics far steadier and more uniform than could be acquired under a variety of commanders, however able.

We see the kingdom of Naples conquered, and the best generals and armies of France annihilated; an important innovation effected in military science; the art of mining, if not invented, carried to unprecedented perfection; a thorough reform introduced in the arms and discipline of the Spanish soldier; and the organization completed of that valiant infantry which is honestly eulogized by a French writer as irresistible in attack and impossible to rout; and which carried the banners of Spain victorious, for more than a century, over the most distant parts of Europe.

CHAPTER XXXI

ILLNESS AND DEATH OF ISABELLA—HER CHARACTER

1504

THE acquisition of an important kingdom in the heart of Europe, and of the New World beyond the waters was rapidly raising Spain to the first rank of European powers. But, in this noontide of her success, she was to experience the loss of that illustrious personage who had so long and so gloriously presided over her destinies.

The queen's health, during the last few years, had been greatly impaired by incessant personal fatigue and exposure, and by the unremitting activity of her mind. It had suffered far more severely, however, from a series of heavy domestic calamities, which had fallen on her with little intermission since the death of her mother in 1496. Her surviving children were removed far from her into distant lands, with the occasional exception, indeed, of Joanna, who caused a still deeper pang to her mother's affectionate heart by exhibiting infirmities which justified the most melancholy presages for the future.

Far from abandoning herself to weak and useless repining, however, Isabella sought consolation in the exercises of piety, and in the earnest discharge of the duties attached to her exalted station. Accordingly, we find her attentive as ever to the minutest interests of her subjects, supporting her great minister Ximénes in his schemes of reform, quickening the zeal for discovery in the west, and, at the close of the year 1503, on the alarm of the French invasion, rousing her dying energies to kindle a spirit of resistance in her people. These strong mental exertions accelerated the decay of her bodily strength.

In the beginning of that very year she had declined so visibly that the cortes of Castile, much alarmed, petitioned her to provide for the government of the kingdom after her decease, in case of the absence or incapacity of Joanna.

In the spring of the following year, Ferdinand fell ill of a fever, and the queen was seized with the same disorder accompanied by more alarming symptoms. Meanwhile, Isabella lost nothing of her solicitude for the welfare of her people, and the great concerns of government. While reclining, as she was obliged to do great part of the day, on her couch, she listened to the recital or reading of whatever occurred of interest, at home or abroad.

On October 12th she executed that celebrated testament which reflects so clearly the peculiar qualities of her mind and character. She begins with prescribing the arrangements for her burial. She next provides for several charities, assigning, among others, marriage portions for poor maidens, and a considerable sum for the redemption of Christian captives in Barbary. After this she comes to the succession of the crown, which she settles on the infanta Joanna, as 'queen proprietor', and the archduke Philip as her husband. She gives them much good counsel respecting their future administration. She next comes to the great question proposed by the cortes of 1503, respecting the government of the realm in the absence or incapacity of Joanna. She appoints King Ferdinand her husband to be the sole regent of Castile, in that exigency, until the majority of her grandson Charles. And, lastly, concluding in the same beautiful strain of conjugal tenderness in which she began, she says, 'I beseech the king my lord, that he will accept all my jewels, or such as he shall select, so that seeing them, he may be reminded of the singular love I always bore him while living, and that I am now waiting for him in a better world; by which remembrance he may be encouraged to live the more justly and holily in this'.

After performing this duty, she daily grew weaker, the powers of her mind seeming to brighten as those of her body declined. The concerns of her government still occupied her thoughts; and several public measures she made the subject of a codicil to her former will. It was executed November 23rd, only three days before her death. The first concerns the codification of the laws. For this purpose, the queen appoints a commission to make a new digest of the statutes and *pragmáticas*. The second item had reference to the natives of the New World. Lastly, she expresses her doubts as to the legality of the revenue drawn from the *alcavalas*, constituting the principal income of the crown. She directs a commission to ascertain whether it were originally intended to be perpetual, and if this were done with the free consent of the people.

At length, having received the sacraments, and performed all the offices of a sincere and devout Christian, she gently expired a little before noon, on Wednesday, November 26, 1504, in the fifty-fourth year of her age, and thirtieth of her reign.

'My hand,' says Peter Martyr, in a letter written on the same day to the archbishop of Granada, 'falls powerless by my side, for very sorrow. The world has lost its noblest ornament.'

No time was lost in making preparations for transporting the queen's body unembalmed to Granada, in strict conformity to her orders. At length, on December 18th, the melancholy and way-worn cavalcade reached its destination. The remains of Isabella were laid, with simple solemnities, in the Franciscan monastery of the Alhambra.

Her person was of the middle height, and well proportioned. She had a clear, fresh complexion, with light blue eyes and auburn hair. Her manners were most gracious and pleasing, marked by natural dignity and modest reserve, tempered by an affability which flowed from the kindliness of her disposition. She spoke the Castilian with much elegance and correctness. She was temperate even to abstemiousness in her diet. She was equally simple and economical in her apparel. She had little taste for the frivolous amusements which make up so much of court life. Among her moral qualities, the most conspicuous, perhaps, was her magnanimity. She betrayed nothing little or selfish, in thought or action. Her schemes were vast, and executed in the same noble spirit in which they were conceived. But the principle which gave a peculiar colouring to every feature of Isabella's mind was piety. It shone forth from the very depths of her soul with a heavenly radiance which illuminated her whole character.

Isabella's actions were habitually based on principle. Whatever errors of judgment be imputed to her, she most anxiously sought in all situations to discern and discharge her duty.

Isabella's measures were characterized by practical good sense. Her plans, though vast, were never visionary. She was quick to discern objects of real utility. She had none of the exclusive, local prejudices, too common with her countrymen. She drew talent from the most remote quarters to her dominions. Although the skilful selection of her agents was an obvious cause of Isabella's success, yet another is to be found in her own vigilance and untiring exertions.

With all her high qualifications, Isabella would have been still unequal to the achievement of her grand designs without possessing a degree of fortitude rare in either sex, not the courage which implies contempt of personal danger—but that moral courage which sustains the spirit in the dark hour of adversity, and, gathering light from within to dispel the darkness, imparts its own cheering influence to all around.

We see but one judgment formed of her, whether by foreigners or natives. The French and Italian writers join in celebrating the triumphant glories of her reign, and her magnanimity, wisdom, and purity of character. Her own subjects extol her as 'the most brilliant exemplar of every virtue', and mourn over the day of her death as 'the last of the prosperity and happiness of their country'.

CHAPTER XXXII

FERDINAND REGENT—HIS SECOND MARRIAGE—DISSENSIONS WITH PHILIP—RESIGNATION OF THE REGENCY

1504–1506

KING FERDINAND took the usual measures for announcing the succession. He resigned the crown of Castile, which he had worn with so much glory for thirty years. From a platform raised in the great square of Toledo, the heralds proclaimed, with sound of trumpet, the accession of Philip and Joanna to the Castilian throne. The king of Aragon then publicly assumed the title of administrator or governor of Castile, as provided by the queen's testament, and received the obeisance of such of the nobles as were present, in his new capacity. These proceedings took place on the evening of the same day on which the queen expired. Writs were immediately issued for the convocation of a cortes to ratify these proceedings.

The assembly met at Toro, January 11, 1505. The queen's will, as related to the succession, received the entire approbation of the commons, who, together with the grandees and prelates present, took the oaths of allegiance to Joanna as queen and lady proprietor, and to Philip as her husband. They then determined that the exigency contemplated in the testament, of Joanna's incapacity, actually existed, and proceeded to tender their homage to King Ferdinand as the lawful governor of the realm in her name. The latter in turn made the customary oath to respect the laws and liberties of the kingdom. The whole was terminated by an embassy from the cortes, with a written account of its proceedings to their new sovereigns in Flanders.

Many of the nobles were extremely dissatisfied with the queen's settlement of the regency. They had even gone so far as to send to Flanders and invite Philip to assume the government himself as the natural guardian of his wife. The most efficient of his partisans was Don Juan Manuel. This nobleman was a person of uncommon parts, restless and intriguing, plausible in his address, bold in his plans, but exceedingly cautious, and even cunning, in the execution of them.

Philip was persuaded, not only to assert his pretensions to undivided supremacy in Castile, but to send a letter to his royal father-in-law, requiring him to resign the government at once, and retire into Aragon. The demand was treated with some contempt by Ferdinand, who admonished him of his incompetency to govern a nation like the Spaniards, whom he understood so little, but urged him at the same time to present himself before them with his wife, as soon as possible.

Ferdinand, whose policy it had been to crush the overgrown power of the nobility, and who, as a foreigner, had none of the natural claims to loyalty enjoyed by his late queen, was extremely odious to that jealous and haughty body. The number of Philip's adherents increased every day and soon comprehended the most considerable names in the kingdom.

The king, who watched these symptoms of disaffection with deep anxiety, said little. He received further and more unequivocal evidence, at this time, of the alienation of his son-in-law. An Aragonese gentleman whom he had placed near the person of his daughter obtained a letter from her in which she approved in the fullest manner of her father's retaining the administration of the kingdom.

The king received also the alarming intelligence that the emperor Maximilian and his son Philip were tampering with the fidelity of the Great Captain, endeavouring to secure Naples. The king was still further annoyed by reports of the intimate relations subsisting between his old enemy, Louis the Twelfth, and Philip, whose children were affianced to each other. The French monarch, it was said, was prepared to support his ally in an invasion of Castile.

The Catholic king felt sorely perplexed by these multiplied embarrassments. There seemed now no alternative left for him but to maintain his ground by force or to resign at once, as required by Philip, and retire into Aragon. This latter course appears never to have been contemplated by him. He resolved at all hazards to keep the reins in his own grasp. To keep it, he had recourse to an expedient such as neither friend nor foe could have anticipated.

He saw the only chance of maintaining his present position lay in detaching France from the interests of Philip, and securing her to himself. The great obstacle to this was their conflicting claims on Naples. This he purposed to obviate by proposals of marriage to some member of the royal family, in whose favour these claims, with the consent of King Louis, might be resigned. He accordingly despatched a confidential envoy privately into France, with ample instructions for arranging the preliminaries.

Louis the Twelfth had viewed with much satisfaction the growing misunderstanding betwixt Philip and his father-in-law. He felt the deepest disquietude at the prospect of the enormous inheritance which was to devolve on the former, comprehending Burgundy and Flanders, Austria, and probably the Empire, together with the united crowns of Spain and their rich dependencies. By the proposed marriage, a dismemberment might be made at least of the Spanish monarchy; and the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, passing under different sceptres, might serve, as they had formerly done, to neutralize each other.

Without much delay, therefore, preliminaries were arranged with the Aragonese envoy, and immediately after, in the month of August, the count of Cifuentes, and Thomas Malferit, regent of the royal chancery, were publicly sent as plenipotentiaries on the part of King Ferdinand, to conclude and execute the treaty.

It was agreed, as the basis of the alliance, that the Catholic king should be married to Germaine, daughter of Jean de Foix, viscount of Narbonne, and of one of the sisters of Louis the Twelfth, and granddaughter to Leonora, queen of Navarre. She was at this time eighteen years of age, and very beautiful. To this lady Louis the Twelfth consented to resign his claims on Naples, to be secured by way of dowry to her and her heirs, male or female, in perpetuity. In case of her decease without issue, the moiety of the kingdom recognized as his by the partition treaty with Spain was to revert to him. It was further agreed that Ferdinand should reimburse Louis the Twelfth for the expenses of the Neapolitan war, by the payment of one million gold ducats, in ten yearly instalments; and lastly, that a complete amnesty should be granted by him to the lords of the Angevin or French party in Naples, who should receive full restitution of their confiscated honours and estates. A mutual treaty of alliance and commerce was to subsist henceforth between France and Spain, and the two monarchs, holding one another, to quote the words of the instrument, 'as two souls, in one and the same body', pledged themselves to the maintenance and defence of their respective rights and kingdoms against every other power whatever. This treaty was signed by the French king at Blois, October 12, 1505, and ratified by Ferdinand the Catholic, at Segovia, on the 16th of the same month.

Such were the disgraceful and most impolitic terms of this compact by which Ferdinand, in order to secure the brief possession of a barren authority, was content to barter away all those solid advantages flowing from the union of the Spanish monarchies which had been the great and wise object of his own and Isabella's policy. For, in the event of male issue, Aragon and its dependencies must be totally severed from Castile. In the other alternative, the splendid Italian conquests must be shared with his unsuccessful competitor. In any event, he had pledged himself to such an indemnification of the Angevin faction in Naples, as must create inextricable embarrassment, and inflict great injury on his loyal partisans, into whose hands their estates had already passed. And last, though not least, he dishonoured by this unsuitable and precipitate alliance his late illustrious queen, the memory of whose transcendent excellence, if it had faded in any degree from his own breast, was too deeply seated in those of her subjects to allow them to look on the present union otherwise than as a national indignity.

The archduke Philip could scarcely credit this desperate act which struck off at a blow so rich a portion of his inheritance. Philip saw the necessity now of temporizing. Correspondence was resumed with Ferdinand, and an arrangement was at length concluded between the parties, known as the concord of Salamanca, November 24, 1505. The substance of it was that Castile should be governed in the joint names of Ferdinand, Philip, and Joanna, but that the first should be entitled, as his share, to one-half of the public revenue. This treaty, executed in good faith by the Catholic king, was only intended by Philip to lull the suspicions of the former until he could effect a landing in the kingdom, where, he confidently believed, nothing but his presence was wanting to insure success.

On January 8, 1506, Philip and Joanna embarked on board a splendid and numerous armada, and set sail from a port in Zealand. A furious tempest scattered the fleet soon after leaving the harbour; Philip's ship narrowly escaped foundering, and it was not without great difficulty that they succeeded in bringing her into the English port of Weymouth. At length Philip, having reassembled his Flemish fleet at Weymouth, embarked with Joanna and his numerous suite of courtiers and military retainers, and reached Coruña, in the north-western corner of Galicia, after a prosperous voyage, on April 28th.

A short time previous to this event, the betrothed bride of King Ferdinand was received by the archbishop of Saragossa and was conducted with much solemnity to Dueñas, where she was joined by the king. In this place, where thirty years before he had been united to Isabella, he now led to the altar her young and beautiful successor.

Less than six weeks after this, Philip and Joanna landed at Coruña. Ferdinand, who had expected them at some nearer northern port, prepared without loss of time to go forward and receive them. Philip had no intention of an interview at present. He had purposely landed in a remote corner of the country, in order to gain time for his partisans to come forward and declare themselves. The archduke brought over with him a body of three thousand German infantry, in complete order. He soon mustered an additional force of six thousand native Spaniards, which, with the chivalry who thronged to meet him, placed him in a condition to dictate terms to his father-in-law. He now openly proclaimed that he had no intention of abiding by the concord of Salamanca, and that he would never consent to an arrangement prejudicing in any degree his, and his wife's exclusive possession of the crown of Castile.

Ferdinand, at length, finding that Philip, who had now left Coruña, was advancing by a circuitous route into the interior, on purpose to avoid him, and that all access to his daughter was absolutely refused, could no longer repress his indignation. He prepared a circular letter to be sent to the different parts of the country, calling on it to rise and aid him in rescuing the queen, their sovereign, from her present shameful captivity. It does not appear that he sent it. He probably found that the call would not be answered, for the French match had lost him even that degree of favour with which he had been regarded by the commons, so the very expedient on which he relied for perpetuating his authority in Castile was the chief cause of his losing it altogether.

An end was at length put to this scandalous exhibition, and Manuel, whether from increased confidence in his own resources, or the fear of bringing public odium on himself, consented to trust his royal charge to the peril of an interview. The place selected was an open plain near Puebla de Senabria, on the borders of León and Galicia. But even then, the precautions taken were of a kind truly ludicrous, considering the forlorn condition of King Ferdinand. The whole military apparatus of the archduke was put in motion, as if he expected to win the crown by battle.

Ferdinand, on the other hand, came into the field attended by about two hundred nobles and gentlemen, chiefly Aragonese and Italians riding on mules, and simply attired in the short black cloak and bonnet of the country, with no other weapon than the sword usually worn.

Philip wore an anxious, embarrassed air, while his father-in-law maintained the same serene and cheerful aspect as usual. After exchanging salutations, the two monarchs alighted, and entered a small hermitage in the neighbourhood. The conference led to no result.

However reluctant Ferdinand might be to admit it, he was no longer in a condition to stand upon terms. In addition to the entire loss of influence in Castile, he received such alarming accounts from Naples as made him determine on an immediate visit in person to that kingdom. He resolved, therefore, to bow his head to the present storm, in hopes that a brighter day was in reserve for him.

Whatever considerations may have influenced the prudent monarch, he authorized the archbishop of Toledo, who kept near the person of the archduke, to consent to an accommodation on the very grounds proposed by the latter. On June 27th, he signed and solemnly swore to an agreement, by which he surrendered the entire sovereignty of Castile to Philip and Joanna, reserving to himself only the grand-masterships of the military orders, and the revenues secured by Isabella's testament.

On the following day, he executed another instrument of most singular import, in which, after avowing in unequivocal terms his daughter's incapacity, he engages to assist Philip in preventing any interference in her behalf, and to maintain him, as far as in his power, in the sole, exclusive authority.

Before signing these papers, he privately made a protest, in the presence of several witnesses, that what he was about to do was not of his own free will, but from necessity, to extricate himself from his perilous situation, and shield the country from the impending evils of a civil war. He concluded with asserting that, so far from relinquishing his claims to the regency, it was his design to enforce them, as well as to rescue his daughter from her captivity as soon as he was in a condition to do so. Finally, he completed this chain of inconsistencies by addressing a circular letter, dated July 1st, to the different parts of the kingdom, announcing his resignation of the government into the hands of Philip and Joanna, and declaring the act one, which, notwithstanding his own right and power to the contrary, he had previously determined on executing as soon as his children should set foot in Spain.

It is not easy to reconcile this monstrous tissue of incongruity and dissimulation with any motives of necessity or expediency. The whole of the proceedings are of so ambiguous a character as to suggest the inevitable inference that they flowed from habits of dissimulation too strong to be controlled, even when there was no occasion for its exercise.

CHAPTER XXXIII

COLUMBUS—HIS RETURN TO SPAIN—HIS DEATH

1504–1506

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, [meanwhile], returned from his fourth and last voyage. It had been one unbroken series of disappointment and disaster. After quitting Hispaniola, and being driven by storms nearly to the island of Cuba, he traversed the gulf of Honduras and coasted along the margin of the golden region which had so long flitted before his fancy. He pressed forward to the south, now solely occupied with the grand object of discovering a passage into the Indian Ocean. At length, after having with great difficulty advanced somewhat beyond the point of Nombre de Dios, he was compelled by the fury of the elements and the murmurs of his men to abandon the enterprise and retrace his steps. He was subsequently defeated in an attempt to establish a colony on terra firma by the ferocity of the natives; was wrecked on the island of Jamaica, where he was permitted to linger more than a year, through the malice of Ovando, the new governor of St Domingo; and finally, having re-embarked with his shattered crew in a vessel freighted at his own expense, was driven by a succession of terrible tempests across the ocean, until, on November 7, 1504, he anchored in the little port of St Lúcar, twelve leagues from Seville.

At the time of his arrival, the queen was on her death-bed. It was a heavy blow to his hopes.

Columbus, at this time, was so much crippled by the gout, to which he had been long subject, that he was unable to undertake a journey to Segovia, where the court was, during the winter. He lost no time, however, in laying his situation before the king through his son Diego, who was attached to the royal household. He urged his past services, the original terms of the capitulation made with him, their infringement in almost every particular, and his own necessitous condition. But Ferdinand was too busily occupied with his own concerns, at this crisis, to give much heed to those of Columbus. On the approach of a milder season, the admiral was able by easy journeys to reach Segovia and present himself before the monarch.

He was received with all the outward marks of courtesy and regard by Ferdinand. Fair words, however, were not seconded by actions. The king probably had no serious thoughts of reinstating the admiral in his government. His successor, Ovando, was high in the royal favour.

The events of the last voyage, moreover, had probably not tended to dispel any distrust which the king previously entertained of the admiral's capacity for government. His men had been in a state of perpetual insubordination, while his letter to the sovereigns, from Jamaica, exhibited such a deep colouring of despondency and occasionally such wild and visionary projects as might almost suggest the suspicion of a temporary alienation of mind.

But whatever reasons may have operated to postpone Columbus's restoration to power, it was the grossest injustice to withhold from him the revenues secured by the original contract with the crown. The truth was that as the resources of the new countries began to develop themselves more abundantly, Ferdinand felt greater reluctance to comply with the letter of the original capitulation.

What assistance Columbus actually received from the crown at this time, or whether he received any, does not appear. He continued to reside with the court, and accompanied it in its removal to Valladolid.

With spirits broken by this unthankful requital of his services and with a constitution impaired by a life of unmitigated hardship, Columbus's health now rapidly sunk. On the arrival of Philip and Joanna, he addressed a letter to them, through his brother Bartholomew, in which he lamented the infirmities which prevented him from paying his respects in person, and made a tender of his future services. Columbus did not survive to behold the young sovereigns.

On May 19, 1506, he executed a codicil, confirming certain testamentary dispositions formerly made, with special reference to the entail of his estates and dignities, manifesting, in his latest act, the same solicitude he had shown through life, to perpetuate an honourable name. Having completed these arrangements with perfect composure, he expired on the following day.

CHAPTER XXXIV

REIGN AND DEATH OF PHILIP I—PROCEEDINGS IN CASTILE—FERDINAND VISITS NAPLES

1506

KING FERDINAND had no sooner concluded the arrangement with Philip, and withdrawn into his hereditary dominions, than the archduke and his wife proceeded towards Valladolid to receive the homage of the estates convened in that city. Joanna, oppressed with an habitual melancholy, and clad in the sable habiliments better suited to a season of mourning than rejoicing, refused the splendid ceremonial and festivities, with which the city was prepared to welcome her. The usual oaths of allegiance were tendered to Joanna as queen and lady proprietor of the kingdom, and to Philip as her husband, and finally to their eldest son, prince Charles, as heir apparent and lawful successor on the demise of his mother.

From this moment, however, Philip assumed the government into his own hands. The effects were soon visible in the thorough revolution introduced into every department. Old incumbents in office were ejected without ceremony, to make way for new favourites. The Flemings, in particular, were placed in every considerable post, and the principal fortresses of the kingdom intrusted to their keeping.

The style of living at the court was on the most thoughtless scale of wasteful expenditure. The public revenues were wholly unequal to it. To supply the deficit, offices were sold to the highest bidder.

All this could not fail to excite disgust and disquietude throughout the nation. The most alarming symptoms of insubordination began to appear in different parts of the kingdom. In Andalusia, in particular, a confederation of the nobles was organized, with the avowed purpose of rescuing the queen from the duress, in which it was said she was held by her husband.

The minds of the wise and the good were filled with sadness, as they listened to the low murmurs of popular discontent, which seemed to be gradually swelling into strength for some terrible convulsion; and they looked back with fond regret to the halcyon days which they had enjoyed under the temperate rule of Ferdinand and Isabella.

The Catholic king, in the meantime, was pursuing his voyage to Naples. He had been earnestly pressed by the Neapolitans to visit his new dominions, soon after the conquest. He now went, less, however, in compliance with that request, than to relieve his own mind, by assuring himself of the fidelity of his viceroy, Gonsalvo de Córdova. That illustrious man had not escaped the usual lot of humanity, his brilliant successes had brought on him a full measure of the envy which seems to wait on merit like its shadow.

Ferdinand at first endeavoured to abridge the powers of the Great Captain by recalling half the troops in his service, notwithstanding the unsettled state of the kingdom. He then took the decisive step of ordering his return to Castile, on pretence of employing him in affairs of great importance at home. To allure him more effectually, he solemnly pledged himself, by an oath, to transfer to him, on his landing in Spain, the grand-mastership of St Jago, with all its princely dependencies and emoluments, the noblest gift in the possession of the crown. Finding all this ineffectual, and that Gonsalvo still procrastinated his return on various pretexts, the king's uneasiness increased to such a degree that he determined to press his own departure for Naples, and bring back, if not too late, his too poweful vassal.

On September 4, 1506, Ferdinand embarked at Barcelona on board a well-armed squadron of Catalan galleys, taking with him his young and beautiful bride and a numerous train of Aragonese nobles. On the 24th of the month, after a boisterous and tedious passage, he reached the port of Genoa. Here, to his astonishment, he was joined by the Great Captain.

After quitting Genoa, the royal squadron was driven by contrary winds into the neighbouring harbour of Portofino, where Ferdinand received intelligence which promised to change his destination altogether. This was the death of his son-in-law, the young king of Castile.

This event, so unexpected, was occasioned by a fever, brought on by too violent exercise at a game of ball, at an entertainment made for Philip by his favourite, Manuel, in Burgos, where the court was then held. Through the unskilfulness of his physicians, who neglected to bleed him, the disorder rapidly gained ground, and on the 6th day after his attack, being September 25, 1506, he breathed his last. He was but twenty-eight years old, of which brief period he had enjoyed, or endured, the 'golden cares' of sovereignty but little more than two months.

This event spread general consternation throughout the country. The old adherents of Ferdinand, with Ximénes at their head, now looked forward with confidence to his re-establishment in the regency.

The weight of talent and popular consideration was undoubtedly on the king's side. The most formidable of the opposition, Manuel, had declined greatly in credit with the nation during the short, disastrous period of his administration; while the archbishop of Toledo, who might be considered as the leader of Ferdinand's party, possessed talents, energy, and reputed sanctity of character, which combined with the authority of his station, gave him unbounded influence over all classes of the Castilians.

That prelate, foreseeing the anarchy likely to arise on Philip's death, assembled the nobility present at the court, in his own palace, the day before this event took place. It was there agreed to name a provisional council, or regency, who should carry on the government, and provide for the tranquillity of the kingdom. It consisted of seven members, with the archbishop of Toledo at its head. The nobles, in a subsequent convention on October 1st, ratified these proceedings.

A meeting of cortes was wanting to give validity to their acts, as well as to express the popular will in reference to a permanent settlement of the government. There was some difference of opinion, even among the king's friends, as to the expediency of summoning that body at this crisis; but the greatest impediment arose from the queen's refusal to sign the writs.

This unhappy lady's condition had become truly deplorable. During her husband's illness, she had never left his bedside; but neither then, nor since his death, had been seen to shed a tear. She remained in a state of stupid insensibility, sitting in a darkened apartment, her head resting on her hand, and her lips closed, as mute and immovable as a statue. When applied to, for issuing the necessary summons for the cortes, or to make appointments to office, or for any other pressing business, which required her signature, she replied, 'My father will attend to all this when he returns; he is much more conversant with business than I am; I have no other duties now, but to pray for the soul of my departed husband'.

Finding it impossible to obtain the queen's co-operation, the council at length resolved to issue the writs of summons in their own name, as a measure justified by necessity. The place of meeting was fixed at Burgos in the ensuing month of November.

Long before this, indeed immediately after Philip's death, letters had been despatched by Ximénes and his friends to the Catholic king, acquainting him with the state of affairs, and urging his immediate return to Castile.

He received them at Portofino. He determined, however, to continue his voyage, in which he had already advanced so far, to Naples.

The king resumed his voyage, and having touched at several places on the coast, in all which he was received with great enthusiasm, arrived before the capital of his new dominions in the latter part of October.

On the mole they were received by the Great Captain. After passing under a triumphal arch, where Ferdinand swore to respect the liberties and privileges of Naples, the royal pair moved forward. As the procession halted in the various quarters of the city, it was greeted with joyous bursts of music from a brilliant assemblage of knights and ladies.

Ferdinand was too severe an economist of time to waste it willingly on idle pomp and ceremonial. But, after allowing sufficient scope for its indulgence, he devoted himself assiduously to the great purposes of his visit.

He summoned a parliament general of the kingdom, where, after his own recognition, oaths of allegiance were tendered to his daughter Joanna and her posterity, as his successors, without any allusion being made to the rights of his wife. This was a clear evasion of the treaty with France.

Another, and scarcely less disastrous provision of the treaty he complied with in better faith. This was the re-establishment of the Angevin proprietors in their ancient estates. It was, of course, a work of extraordinary difficulty and vexation. When any flaw or impediment could be raised in the Angevin title, the transfer was evaded.

The result, although effected without violence or disorder, was unsatisfactory to all parties. The Angevins rarely received the full extent of their demands. The loyal partisans of Aragon saw the fruits of many a hard-fought battle snatched from their grasp, to be given back again to their enemies. Lastly, the wretched Neapolitans, instead of the favours and immunities incident to a new reign, found themselves burdened with additional imposts. So soon were the fair expectations formed of Ferdinand's coming clouded over by disappointment.

CHAPTER XXXV

FERDINAND'S RETURN AND REGENCY—GONSALVO'S HONOURS AND RETIREMENT

1506–1509

WHILE Ferdinand was thus occupied in Naples, the representatives of most of the cities, summoned by the provisional government, had assembled in Burgos. Before entering on business, they were desirous to obtain the queen's sanction to their proceedings. A committee waited on her for that purpose, but she obstinately refused to give them audience. When pressed by that body on this and other matters, she plainly told them 'to return to their quarters, and not to meddle further in the public business without her express commands'. Not long after this the legislature was prorogued by the royal council for four months.

The term assigned for the provisional government expired in December, and was not renewed. No other regency was appointed by the nobles, and the kingdom, without even the shadow of protection afforded by its cortes, and with no other guide but its crazy sovereign, was left to drift. This was not slow in brewing in every quarter. Such occasions as this proved too plainly that public tranquility was not founded so much on the stability of law as on the personal character of the reigning sovereign.

The king's enemies, in the meantime, were pressing their correspondence with the emperor Maximilian, and urging his immediate presence in Spain. Others devised schemes for marrying the poor queen to the young duke of Calabria, or some other prince. To add to the troubles occasioned by this mesh of intrigue and faction, the country, which of late years had suffered from scarcity, was visited by a pestilence that fell most heavily on the south. In Seville alone, Bernaldez reports the incredible number of thirty thousand persons to have fallen victims to it.

But, although the storm was thus darkening from every quarter, there was no general explosion to shake the state to its foundations, as in the time of Henry the Fourth. Orderly habits, if not principles, had been gradually formed under the long reign of Isabella.

Much of this good result was undoubtedly to be attributed to the vigorous counsels and conduct of Ximénes, who, together with the grand constable and the duke of Alva, had received full powers from Ferdinand to act in his name. Much is also to be ascribed to the politic conduct of the king. Far from an intemperate zeal to resume the sceptre of Castile, he had shown throughout a discreet forbearance.

At length, the Catholic monarch, having completed his arrangements at Naples, and waited until the affairs of Castile were fully ripe for his return, set sail from his Italian capital, June 4, 1507. He proposed to touch at the Genoese port of Savona, where an interview had been arranged between him and Louis the Twelfth. During his residence in Naples, he had assiduously devoted himself to the affairs of the kingdom. After the great work of restoring the Angevins to their estates, he had thoroughly reorganized the interior administration of the kingdom. He made large reforms, moreover, in the courts of law. Lastly, before leaving the city, he acceded to the request of the inhabitants for the re-establishment of their ancient university.

In all these sagacious measures, he had been ably assisted by his viceroy, Gonsalvo de Córdova. From this moment, Ferdinand continued to show Gonsalvo unbounded marks of confidence, advising with him on all important matters, and making him the only channel of royal favour. He again renewed, in the most emphatic manner, his promise to resign the grandmastership of St Jago in his favour, on their return to Spain, and made formal application to the pope to confirm it. In addition to the princely honours already conferred on the Great Captain, he granted him the noble duchy of Sessa. Gonsalvo remained a day or two behind his royal master in Naples, to settle his private affairs. Having discharged all the obligations of a man of honour, he prepared to quit the land over which he had ruled with so much splendour and renown for nearly four years. He was succeeded in the office of grand constable of the kingdom by Prospero Colonna, and in that of viceroy by the count of Ribagorza, Ferdinand's nephew.

On June 28th, the royal fleet of Aragon entered the little port of Savona, where the king of France had already been waiting for it several days. Blithe and jocund were the revels which rung through the halls of this fair city during the brief residence of its royal visitors. But no one excited such general interest and attention as Gonsalvo de Córdova, who was emphatically the hero of the day. None were so open in their admiration as King Louis. At his request, Gonsalvo was admitted to sup at the same table with the Aragonese sovereigns and himself.

During this interview the monarchs held repeated conferences, at which none were present but the papal envoy and Louis's favourite minister, D'Amboise. The subject of discussion can only be conjectured by the subsequent proceedings, which make it probable that it related to Italy; and that it was in this season that the two princes matured the famous league of Cambray.

After enjoying for four days the splendid hospitality of their royal entertainer, the king and queen of Aragon re-embarked, and reached Valencia on July 20, 1507. Ferdinand pressed forward to Castile, where his presence was eagerly expected. On the borders he was met by the dukes of Albuquerque and Medina Celi, the count of Cifuentes, and many other nobles and cavaliers. How different from the forlorn and outcast condition in which he had quitted the country a short year before!

At Tortoles he was met by the queen, his daughter, accompanied by Archbishop Ximénes. The interview between them had more of pain than pleasure in it. The king was greatly shocked by Joanna's appearance. Her wild and haggard features, emaciated figure, and the mean, squalid attire in which she was dressed made it difficult to recognize any trace of the daughter from whom he had been so long separated. She discovered more sensibility on seeing him than she had shown since her husband's death, and henceforth resigned herself to her father's will with little opposition. She lingered out a half century of dreary existence, as completely dead to the world as the remains which slept in the monastery of Santa Clara beside her.

From this time the Catholic king exercised an authority nearly as undisputed, and far less limited and defined than in the days of Isabella. So firm did he feel in his seat, indeed, that he omitted to obtain the constitutional warrant of cortes. The whole affair was finally settled, with more attention to constitutional forms, in the cortes held at Madrid, October 6, 1510, when the king took the regular oaths as administrator of the realm in his daughter's name, and as guardian of her son.

Ferdinand's deportment, on his first return, was distinguished by a most gracious clemency, evinced not so much, indeed, by any excessive remuneration of services, as by the politic oblivion of injuries. If he ever alluded to these, it was in a sportive way, implying that there was no rancour or ill will at heart.

With all this complaisance, however, the king did not neglect precautions for placing his authority on a sure basis, and fencing it round so as to screen it effectually from the insults to which it had been formerly exposed. He retained in pay most of the old Italian levies, with the ostensible purpose of an African expedition. He took good care that the military orders should hold their troops in constant readiness, and that the militia of the kingdom should be in condition for instant service. He formed a body-guard to attend the royal person on all occasions.

Notwithstanding the king's general popularity, there were still a few considerable persons who regarded his resumption of authority with an evil eye. Of these, Don Juan Manuel had fled the kingdom before his approach and taken refuge at the court of Maximilian. The duke of Nájara, however, still remained in Castile, shutting himself up in his fortresses, and refusing all compromise or obedience. The king without hesitation commanded Navarro to march against him with his whole force. Nájara was persuaded by his friends to tender his submission, without waiting the encounter. He surrendered his strongholds to the king, who, after detaining them some time in his keeping, delivered them over to the duke's eldest son.

With another offender he dealt more sternly. This was Don Pedro de Córdova, marquis of Priego. This nobleman, in common with some other Andalusian lords, had taken umbrage at the little estimation and favour shown them, as they conceived, by Ferdinand, in comparison with the nobles of the north. His temerity went so far as not only to obstruct the proceedings of one of the royal officers sent to Córdova to inquire into recent disturbances there but to imprison him in the dungeons of his castle of Montilla.

This outrage on the person of his own servant exasperated the king beyond all bounds. He resolved at once to make an example of the offender as should strike terror into the disaffected nobles and shield the royal authority from the repetition of similar indignities. Ferdinand made his preparations on a formidable scale, ordering, in addition to the regular troops, a levy of all between the ages of twenty and seventy throughout Andalusia. Priego's friends, alarmed at these signs of the gathering tempest, besought him to avert it, if possible, by instant concession. His uncle, the Great Captain, urged this most emphatically, as the only way of escaping utter ruin.

The rash young man, finding himself likely to receive no support in the unequal contest, accepted the counsel, and hastened to Toledo, to throw himself at the king's feet. The indignant monarch, however, would not admit him into his presence.

Ferdinand went on with his preparations, and having completed them, advanced rapidly to the south. When arrived at Córdova, he ordered the imprisonment of the marquis. A formal process was then instituted against him before the royal council, on the charge of high treason. He made no defence, but threw himself on the mercy of his sovereign. The court declared that he had incurred the penalty of death, but that the king, in consideration of his submission, was graciously pleased to commute this for a fine of twenty millions of maravedies, perpetual banishment from Córdova and its district, and the delivery of his fortresses into the royal keeping, with the entire demolition of the offending castle of Montilla.

The Castilian aristocracy, alarmed and disgusted by the severity of a sentence which struck down one of the most considerable of their order, were open in their remonstrances to the king. Ferdinand, however, was inexorable; and the sentence was executed. Gonsalvo coolly remarked, 'It was crime enough in Don Pedro to be related to me'.

This illustrious man had had good reason to feel, before this, that his credit at court was on the wane. On his return to Spain, he was received with unbounded enthusiasm by the nation. Ferdinand showed his usual gracious manners in his reception of Gonsalvo. It was not long, however, before the latter found that this was all he was to expect. No allusion was made to the grand-mastership. When it was at length brought before the king, and he was reminded of his promises, he contrived to defer their performance under various pretexts, until, at length, it became too apparent that it was his intention to evade them altogether.

While the Great Captain and his friends were filled with indignation, a circumstance occurred to increase the coldness arising in Ferdinand's mind towards his injured subject. This was the proposed marriage of Gonsalvo's daughter Elvira to his friend the constable of Castile. Ferdinand had designed to secure her large inheritance to his own family, by an alliance with his grandson, Juan de Aragon, son of the archbishop of Saragossa. His displeasure, at finding himself crossed in this, was further sharpened by the petulant spirit of his young queen. She extended her petty resentment to Gonsalvo, who saw the duke of Alva from this time installed in the honours he had before exclusively enjoyed, of immediate attendance on her royal person whenever she appeared in public.

However indifferent Gonsalvo may have been to the little mortifications inflicted by female spleen, he could no longer endure his residence at court. He obtained leave, without difficulty, to withdraw to his own estates.

From this time he remained on his estates in the south, chiefly at Loja, with an occasional residence in Granada, where he enjoyed the society of his old friend and military instructor, the count of Tendilla. When the league of Cambray was adjusted, the king of France and the pope were desirous of giving him the command of the allied armies. But Ferdinand had injured him too sensibly to care to see him again at the head of a military force in Italy. He was as little desirous of employing him in public affairs at home and suffered the remainder of his days to pass away in distant seclusion.

CHAPTER XXXVI

XIMÉNES—CONQUESTS IN AFRICA—UNIVERSITY OF ALCALÁ—POLYGLOT BIBLE

1508–1510

THE high-handed measures of Ferdinand, in regard to the marquis of Priego and some other nobles, excited general disgust among the jealous aristocracy of Castile. But they appear to have found more favour with the commons. As a matter of policy, however, even with the nobles, this course does not seem to have been miscalculated. It showed that the king was now possessed of power to enforce obedience and was fully resolved to exert it.

Notwithstanding a few deviations, Ferdinand's conduct on his return was extremely lenient and liberal. The present excessive acts of severity are to be regarded not as the sallies of personal resentment, but as the dictates of a calculating policy, intended to strike terror into the turbulent spirits whom fear only could hold in check.

To this energetic course he was stimulated by the counsels of Ximénes. This eminent prelate had now reached the highest ecclesiastical honours short of the papacy. Soon after Ferdinand's restoration, he received a cardinal's hat from Pope Julius the Second. This was followed by his appointment to the office of inquisitor general of Castile. His zeal glowed fiercer than ever for the propagation of the Catholic faith. His zeal found direction in a crusade against the neighbouring Moslems of Africa, who had retaliated the wrongs of Granada by repeated descents on the southern coasts of the Peninsula. At the instigation and with the aid of Ximénes, an expedition had been fitted out soon after Isabella's death, which resulted in the capture of Mazarquivir, an important port and formidable nest of pirates on the Barbary coast. He now meditated a more difficult enterprise, the conquest of Oran.

This place, about a league from the former, was one of the most considerable of the Moslem possessions in the Mediterranean, being a principal mart for the trade of the Levant. It contained about twenty thousand inhabitants, was strongly fortified, and had acquired a degree of opulence by its extensive commerce which enabled it to maintain a swarm of cruisers.

No sooner was Ferdinand quietly established again in the government than Ximénes urged him to undertake this new conquest. The king saw its importance, but objected the want of funds. The cardinal, who was prepared for this, replied that 'he was ready to lend whatever sums were necessary, and to take the sole charge of the expedition, leading it, if the king pleased, in person'. Ferdinand readily acquiesced in the proposition.

No time was lost in completing the requisite preparations. Besides the Italian veterans, levies were drawn from all quarters of the country, especially from the cardinal's own diocese. Before the close of spring, in 1509, all was in readiness, and a fleet of ten galleys and eighty smaller vessels rode in the harbour of Cartagena, having on board four thousand horse and ten thousand foot. In accomplishing all this, the cardinal had experienced greater obstacles than those arising from bodily infirmity or age. His plans had been constantly discouraged and thwarted by the nobles.

On May 16, 1509, the fleet weighed anchor, and on the following day reached the African port of Mazarquivir. No time was lost in disembarking, for the fires on the hill-tops showed that the country was already in alarm. It was proposed to direct the main attack against a lofty height, or ridge of land, rising between Mazarquivir and Oran, so near the latter as entirely to command it. At the same time, the fleet was to drop down before the Moorish city and by opening a brisk cannonade divert the attention of the inhabitants from the principal point of assault.

As soon as the Spanish army had landed, and formed in order of battle, Ximénes mounted his mule, and rode along the ranks. He was dressed in his pontifical robes, with a belted sword at his side. The cardinal made a brief but animated harangue to his soldiers. He reminded them of the wrongs they had suffered from the Moslems, the devastation of their coasts, and their brethren dragged into merciless slavery. When he had sufficiently roused their resentment against the enemies of their country and religion, he stimulated their cupidity by dwelling on the golden spoil which awaited them in the opulent city of Oran. He concluded his discourse by declaring that he had come to peril his own life in the good cause of the Cross, and to lead them on to battle.

Slowly and silently the Spanish troops began their ascent up the steep sides of the sierra, under the friendly cover of a thick mist, which, rolling heavily down the skirts of the hills, shielded them for a time from the eye of the enemy. As soon as they emerged from it, however, they were saluted with showers of balls, arrows, and other deadly missiles, followed by the desperate charges of the Moors. The numbers of the enemy, and the advantages of their position enabled them to dispute the ground with fearful obstinacy. At length, Navarro got a small battery of heavy guns to operate on the flank of the Moors. The effect of this movement was soon visible. Retreat was soon quickened into a disorderly flight.

While this was going on, the fleet had anchored before the city and opened a very heavy cannonade. The troops on board made good their landing and soon joined their victorious countrymen descending from the sierra. They then pushed forward in all haste towards Oran, proposing to carry the place by escalade. They were poorly provided with ladders, but the desperate energy of the moment overleaped every obstacle. The first who gained the summit was Sousa, captain of the cardinal's guard, who, shouting forth 'St Jago and Ximénes,' unfurled his colours, emblazoned with the primate's arms on one side, and the Cross on the other, and planted them on the battlements. Soldiers leaping into the town got possession of the gates and threw them open to their comrades. The whole army now rushed in, sweeping everything before it. No mercy was shown; no respect for age or sex, and the soldiery abandoned themselves to brutal license and ferocity.

No less than four thousand Moors were said to have fallen in the battle, and from five to eight thousand made prisoners. The loss of the Christians was inconsiderable. As Ximénes landed and entered the gates, he was hailed with thundering acclamations by the army as the true victor of Oran.

The conquest of Oran opened unbounded scope to the ambition of Ximénes, who saw in imagination the banner of the Cross floating triumphant from the walls of every Moslem city on the Mediterranean. He experienced, however, serious impediments to his further progress. Navarro, accustomed to an independent command, chafed in his present subordinate situation, especially under a spiritual leader whose military science he justly held in contempt. But what troubled the prelate more than this insolence of his general was a letter which fell into his hands, addressed by the king to Count Navarro, in which he requested him to be sure to find some pretence for detaining the cardinal in Africa as long as his presence could be made any way serviceable. Ximénes put the worst possible construction on the expressions in his letter. He saw himself a mere tool in Ferdinand's hands, to be used so long as occasion might serve, with the utmost indifference to his own interests or convenience. These humiliating suspicions, together with the arrogant bearing of his general, disgusted him with the further prosecution of the expedition. He was confirmed in his purpose of returning to Spain.

Splendid preparations were made for his reception in Spain, and he was invited to visit the court at Valladolid, to receive the homage and public testimonials due to his eminent services. He declined these compliments, and hastened without loss of time to his favourite city of Alcalá. From time to time he remitted supplies for the maintenance of Oran; and he lost no opportunity of stimulating Ferdinand to prosecute his conquests.

The Catholic king, however, felt too sensibly the importance of his new possessions to require such admonition; and Count Pedro Navarro was furnished with ample resources of every kind, and, above all, with the veterans formed under the eye of Gonsalvo de Córdova. Thus placed on an independent field of conquest, the Spanish general was not slow in pushing his advantages. His first enterprise was against Bugia, whose king he routed in two pitched battles, and got possession of his flourishing capital. Algiers, Tunis, Tremecen, and other cities on the Barbary coast submitted one after another to the Spanish arms.

On July 26, 1510, the ancient city of Tripoli, after a most bloody and desperate defence, surrendered to the arms of the victorious general whose name had now become terrible along the whole northern borders of Africa. In the following month, however, he met with a serious discomfiture in the island of Gelves, where four thousand of his men were slain or made prisoners. This check in the brilliant career of Count Navarro put a final stop to the progress of the Castilian arms in Africa under Ferdinand.

The results already obtained, however, were of great importance, whether we consider the value of the acquisitions or the security gained for commerce. Most of the new conquests escaped from the Spanish crown in later times. The conquests of Ximénes, however, were placed in so strong a posture of defence as to resist every attempt for their recovery by the enemy and to remain permanently incorporated with the Spanish empire.

This illustrious prelate, meanwhile, was busily occupied at Alcalá de Henares with watching over the interests and rapid development of his infant university. As far back as 1497, Ximénes had conceived the idea of establishing a university in the ancient town of Alcalá. He even went so far as to obtain plans at this time for his buildings from a celebrated architect. Other engagements, however, postponed the commencement of the work till 1500, when the cardinal himself laid the corner-stone of the principal college.

The plans were too extensive, however, to admit of being speedily accomplished. Besides the principal college of San Ildefonso, named in honour of the patron saint of Toledo, there were nine others, together with an hospital for the reception of invalids at the university. These edifices were built in the most substantial manner, and such parts as admitted of it, as the libraries, refectories, and chapels, were finished with elegance, and even splendour.

At the expiration of eight years, the cardinal had the satisfaction of seeing the whole of his vast design completed. It was, indeed, a noble enterprise, more particularly when viewed as the work of a private individual.

The erection of the buildings, however, did not terminate the labours of the primate, who now assumed the task of digesting a scheme of instruction and discipline for his infant seminary. In doing this, he sought light wherever it was to be found, and borrowed many useful hints from the venerable university of Paris.

Having completed his arrangements, the cardinal sought the most competent agents for carrying his plans into execution, from abroad and at home. In this he was perfectly successful, and we find the university catalogue at this time inscribed with the names of the most distinguished scholars in their various departments.

Five years after this period, in 1513, King Ferdinand, in an excursion made for the benefit of his declining health, paid a visit to Alcalá. Ever since his return from Oran, the cardinal, disgusted with public life, had remained with a few brief exceptions in his own diocese, devoted solely to his personal and professional duties. It was with proud satisfaction that he now received his sovereign, and exhibited to him the noble testimony of the great objects to which his retirement had been consecrated.

In the midst of his pressing duties Ximénes found time for the execution of another work which would alone have been sufficient to render his name immortal in the republic of letters. This was his famous Bible, or Complutensian Polyglot, as usually termed, from the place where it was printed. It was on the plan, first conceived by Origen, of exhibiting in one view the Scriptures in their various ancient languages. It was a work of surpassing difficulty.

The conduct of the work was intrusted to nine scholars well skilled in the ancient tongues, as most of them had evinced by works of critical acuteness and erudition. Ximénes, who, however limited his attainments in general literature, was an excellent biblical critic, frequently presided and took a prominent part in these deliberations. The difficulties of the undertaking were sensibly increased by those of the printing.

The work when completed occupied six volumes folio, the first four devoted to the Old Testament, the fifth to the New, the last containing a Hebrew and Chaldaic vocabulary, with other elementary treatises of singular labour and learning. It was not brought to an end till 1517, fifteen years after its commencement, and a few months only before the death of its illustrious projector. The cardinal's Bible has the merit of being the first successful attempt at a polyglot version of the Scriptures.

CHAPTER XXXVII

WARS AND POLITICS OF ITALY
1508–1513

THE domestic history of Spain, after Ferdinand's resumption of the regency, contains few remarkable events. Its foreign relations were more important.

The possession of Naples necessarily brought Ferdinand within the sphere of Italian politics. He showed little disposition, however, to avail himself of it for the further extension of his conquests. The craving appetite of Louis the Twelfth, on the other hand, sharpened by the loss of Naples, sought to indemnify itself by more ample acquisitions in the north. As far back as 1504, he had arranged a plan with the emperor for the partition of the continental possessions of Venice.

At length the projected partition was definitely settled by the celebrated treaty of Cambray, December 10, 1508, between Louis the Twelfth and the emperor Maximilian, in which the pope, King Ferdinand, and all princes who had any claims for spoliations by the Venetians were invited to take part. The share of the spoil assigned to the Catholic monarch was the five Neapolitan cities, Trani, Brindisi, Gallipoli, Pulignano, and Otranto. The Spanish court, and, not long after, Julius the Second, ratified the treaty.

Never was there a project more destitute of principle, or sound policy. There was not one of the contracting parties, who was at that very time in close alliance with the state, the dismemberment of which he was plotting. This was the true key to the conspiracy against Venice, envy of her superior wealth and magnificence, hatred engendered by her too arrogant bearing, and lastly the evil eye, with which kings naturally regard the movements of an active, aspiring republic.

Early in April, 1509, Louis the Twelfth crossed the Alps at the head of a force which bore down all opposition. City and castle fell before him. On May 14th was fought the bloody battle of Agnadel, which broke the power of Venice and at once decided the fate of the war. Ferdinand had contributed nothing to these operations, except by his diversion on the side of Naples, where he possessed himself without difficulty of the cities allotted to his share. They were the cheapest and, if not the most valuable, were the most permanent acquisitions of the war, being reincorporated in the monarchy of Naples.

Then followed the memorable decree by which Venice released her continental provinces from their allegiance, authorizing them to provide in any way they could for their safety, a measure which, whether originating in panic or policy, was perfectly consonant with the latter. The confederates who had remained united during the chase soon quarrelled over the division of the spoil. Ancient jealousies revived. The republic, with cool and consummate diplomacy, availed herself of this state of feeling.

Pope Julius, who had gained all that he had proposed, and was satisfied with the humiliation of Venice, now felt all his former antipathies and distrust of the French return in full force. He planned a new coalition for the expulsion of the French, calling on the other allies to take part in it. Louis retaliated by summoning a council to inquire into the pope's conduct, and by marching his troops into the territories of the church.

The advance of the French, who had now got possession of Bologna, alarmed Ferdinand. He had secured the objects for which he had entered into the war, and was loath to be diverted from enterprises in which he was interested nearer home. The Catholic king sent repeated and earnest remonstrances to Louis the Twelfth against his aggressions on the church, beseeching him not to interrupt the peace of Christendom.

To secure Ferdinand more to his interests, the pope granted him the investiture, so long withheld, of Naples, on the same easy terms on which it was formerly held by the Aragonese line.

On October 4, 1511, a treaty was concluded between Julius the Second, Ferdinand, and Venice, with the avowed object of protecting the church—in other words, driving the French out of Italy. From the pious purpose to which it was devoted, it was called the Holy League. The quota to be furnished by the king of Aragon was twelve hundred heavy and one thousand light cavalry, ten thousand foot, and a squadron of eleven galleys, to act in concert with the Venetian fleet.

Early in 1512, France, by great exertions and without a single confederate out of Italy, save the false and fluctuating emperor, got an army into the field superior to that of the allies in point of numbers, and still more so in the character of its commander. This was Gaston de Foix, duke of Nemours, and brother of the queen of Aragon. Though a boy in years, for he was but twenty-two, he was ripe in understanding, and possessed consummate military talents. He introduced a severer discipline into his army, and an entirely new system of tactics. In less than a fortnight after leaving Milan, he relieved Bologna then besieged by the allies, made a countermarch on Brescia, defeated a detachment by the way, and the whole Venetian army under its walls. He again put himself in motion, and, descending on Ravenna, succeeded in bringing the allied army to a decisive action under its walls. This battle, fought with the greatest numbers, was also the most murderous which had stained the fair soil of Italy for a century. No less than eighteen or twenty thousand, according to authentic accounts, fell in it, comprehending the best blood of France and Italy.

There are few instances in history, if indeed there be any, of so brief, and at the same time so brilliant a military career, as that of Gaston de Foix. It well entitled him to the epithet his countrymen gave him of the 'thunderbolt of Italy.'

The defeat at Ravenna struck a panic into the confederates. The stout heart of Julius the Second faltered, and it required all the assurances of the Spanish and Venetian ministers to keep him staunch to his purpose. King Ferdinand issued orders to the Great Captain to hold himself in readiness for taking the command of forces to be instantly raised for Naples. There could be no better proof of the royal consternation.

The victory of Ravenna, however, was more fatal to the French than to their foes. The death of Gaston de Foix seemed to dissolve the only bond which held the French together. The officers became divided, the soldiers disheartened. The allies, advised of this, recovered confidence and renewed their exertions. Through Ferdinand's influence over his son-in-law, Henry the Eighth of England, the latter had been induced openly to join the League in the beginning of the present year. The Catholic king had the address, moreover, just before the battle to detach the emperor from France, by effecting a truce between him and Venice. The French, now menaced and pressed on every side, began their retreat. In less than three months after the fatal victory, they were at the foot of the Alps, having abandoned not only their recent but all their conquests in the north of Italy.

The same results now took place as in the late war against Venice. The confederates quarrelled over the division of the spoil. The republic, with the largest claims, obtained the least concessions. Ferdinand earnestly remonstrated with the pope, and subsequently with Maximilian, on this mistaken policy. But the indifference of the one and the cupidity of the other were closed against argument. The result was precisely what the prudent monarch foresaw. Venice was driven into the arms of her perfidious ancient ally, and on March 23, 1513, a definitive treaty was arranged with France for their mutual defence. Thus the most efficient member was alienated from the confederacy. All the recent advantages of the allies were compromised. New combinations were to be formed, and new and interminable prospects of hostility opened.

Ferdinand, relieved from immediate apprehensions of the French, took comparatively little interest in Italian politics. He was too much occupied with settling his conquests in Navarre.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

CONQUEST OF NAVARRE

1512–1513

WHILE Spaniards were thus on the fields of Italy, King Ferdinand was making a most important acquisition of territory nearer home. The sceptre of Navarre passed from the hands of Eleanor, Ferdinand's sister, after a reign of a few brief days, into those of her grandson Phoebus. The latter prince lived to enjoy his crown only four years, when he was succeeded by his sister Catharine.

It was not to be supposed that Ferdinand and Isabella, so attentive to enlarge their empire to the full extent of the geographical limits which nature seemed to have assigned it, would lose the opportunity now presented of incorporating into it the hitherto independent kingdom of Navarre, by the marriage of their own heir with its sovereign. All their efforts, however, were frustrated by the queen mother who evaded the proposed match and in the end effected a union between her daughter and a French noble. This was a most fatal error. The independence of Navarre had hitherto been maintained less through its own strength than the weakness of its neighbours. But, now that the petty states around her had been absorbed into two great and powerful monarchies, it was not to be expected that so feeble a barrier would be longer respected or that it would not be swept away in the first collision of those formidable forces. But, although the independence of the kingdom must be lost, the princes of Navarre might yet maintain their station by a union with the reigning family of France or Spain. By the present connexion with a mere private individual they lost both the one and the other.

Still the most friendly relations subsisted between the Catholic king and his niece during the lifetime of Isabella. The sovereigns assisted her in taking possession of her turbulent dominions. They supported her with their arms in resisting her uncle Jean, viscount of Narbonne, who claimed the crown on the groundless pretext of its being limited to male heirs.

The alliance with Spain was drawn still closer by the avowed purpose of Louis the Twelfth to support his nephew, Gaston de Foix, in the claims of his deceased father. The death of the young hero, however, at Ravenna, wholly changed the relations and feelings of the two countries. Navarre had nothing immediately to fear from France. She felt distrust of Spain on more than one account, especially for the protection afforded the Beaumontese exiles, at the head of whom was Ferdinand's nephew.

France, standing alone and at bay against the rest of Europe, found the alliance of the little state of Navarre of importance to her, especially at the present juncture, when the project of an expedition against Guienne, by the combined armies of Spain and England, naturally made Louis the Twelfth desirous to secure the goodwill of a prince who might be said to wear the keys of the Pyrenees at his girdle. With these amicable dispositions, the king and queen of Navarre despatched their plenipotentiaries to Blois, early in May, soon after the battle of Ravenna, with full powers to conclude a treaty of alliance and confederation with the French government.

In the meantime, June 8th, an English squadron arrived at Passage, in Guipuscoa, having ten thousand men on board under Thomas Grey, marquis of Dorset, in order to co-operate with King Ferdinand's army in the descent on Guienne. This latter force, consisting of two thousand five hundred horse, light and heavy, six thousand foot, and twenty pieces of artillery, was placed under Don Fadrique de Toledo, the duke of Alva. Before making any movement, however, Ferdinand, who knew the equivocal dispositions of the Navarrese sovereigns, determined to secure himself from the annoyance which their strong position enabled them to give him on whatever route he adopted. He accordingly sent to request a free passage through their dominions, with the demand, moreover, that they should intrust six of their principal fortresses to such Navarrese as he should name, as a guaranty for their neutrality during the expedition. He accompanied this modest proposal with the alternative that the sovereigns should become parties to the Holy League, pledging the whole strength of the confederacy to protect them against any hostile attempts of France.

The situation of these unfortunate princes was in the highest degree embarrassing. The neutrality they had so long and sedulously maintained was now to be abandoned. Their choice, whichever party they espoused, must compromise their possessions on one or the other side of the Pyrenees. In this dilemma they sent ambassadors into Castile to obtain some modification of the terms, or at least to protract negotiations till some definitive arrangement should be made with Louis the Twelfth.

On July 17th, their plenipotentiaries signed a treaty with that monarch at Blois, by which France and Navarre mutually agreed to defend each other, in case of attack, against all enemies whatever. By another provision, obviously directed against Spain, it was stipulated that neither nation should allow a passage to the enemies of the other through its dominions. And, by a third, Navarre pledged herself to declare war on the English now assembled in Guipuscoa, and all those co-operating with them.

Through a singular accident, Ferdinand was made acquainted with the principal articles of this treaty before its signature. He now saw the hopelessness of further negotiation, and, determining to anticipate the stroke prepared for him, commanded his general to invade without delay, and occupy Navarre.

The duke of Alva crossed the borders on July 21st, proclaiming that no harm should be offered to those who voluntarily submitted. On the 23rd, he arrived before Pamplona. On the following day, the city surrendered. The duke of Alva lost no time in pressing his advantage; in less than a fortnight he overran and subdued nearly the whole of upper Navarre. So short a time sufficed for the subversion of a monarchy which, in defiance of storm and stratagem, had maintained its independence unimpaired, with a few brief exceptions, for seven centuries.

King Ferdinand, who descried the storm now gathering on the side of France, resolved to meet it promptly, and commanded his general to cross the mountains, and occupy the districts of lower Navarre. In this he expected the co-operation of the English. But he was disappointed. The marquis of Dorset alleged that the time consumed in the reduction of Navarre made it too late for the expedition against Guienne, which was now placed in a posture of defence. He loudly complained that his master had been duped by the Catholic king, who had used his ally to make conquests solely for himself; and, in spite of every remonstrance, he re-embarked his whole force.

The duke of Alva, thus unsupported, was no match for the French under Longueville, strengthened, moreover, by the veteran corps returned from Italy, with the brave La Palice. Indeed, he narrowly escaped being hemmed in between the two armies, so as to make good his retreat through the pass of Roncesvalles, and throw himself into Pamplona.

On April 1st, in the following year, 1513, Ferdinand effected a truce with Louis the Twelfth, embracing their respective territories west of the Alps. It continued a year, and at its expiration was renewed for a similar time. This arrangement, by which Louis sacrificed the interests of his ally the king of Navarre, gave Ferdinand ample time for settling and fortifying his new conquests; while it left the war open in a quarter where, he well knew, others were more interested than himself to prosecute it with vigour. The allies loudly inveighed against the treachery of their confederate who had so unscrupulously sacrificed the common interest, by relieving France from the powerful diversion he was engaged to make on her western borders.

Ferdinand availed himself of the interval of repose, now secured, to settle his new conquests. He had transferred his residence first to Burgos, and afterwards to Logroño, that he might be near the theatre of operations. He was indefatigable in raising reinforcements and supplies, and expressed his intention at one time, notwithstanding the declining state of his health, to take the command in person. He showed his usual sagacity in various regulations.

On March 23, 1513, the estates of Navarre took the usual oaths of allegiance to King Ferdinand. On June 15, 1515, the Catholic monarch, by a solemn act in cortes, held at Burgos, incorporated his new conquests into the kingdom of Castile. The event excited some surprise, considering his more intimate relations with Aragon. But it was to the arms of Castile that he was chiefly indebted for the conquest; and it was on her superior wealth and resources that he relied for maintaining it.

CHAPTER XXXIX

DEATH OF GONSALVO DE CÓRDOVA—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF FERDINAND—HIS CHARACTER

1513-1516

NOTWITHSTANDING the good order which King Ferdinand maintained in Castile by his energetic conduct, as well as by his policy of diverting the effervescing spirits of the nation to foreign enterprise, he still experienced annoyance from various causes. Among these were Maximilian's pretensions to the regency, as paternal grandfather of the heir apparent. The emperor, indeed, had more than once threatened to assert his preposterous claims to Castile in person.

In the winter of 1509 an arrangement was made with the emperor, through the mediation of Louis the Twelfth, by which he finally relinquished his pretensions to the regency of Castile. Even after this pacification, the Austrian party contrived to disquiet the king by maintaining the archduke Charles's pretensions to the government in the name of his unfortunate mother, until at length the Spanish monarch came to entertain not merely distrust but positive aversion for his grandson. The latter, as he advanced in years, was taught to regard Ferdinand as one who excluded him from his rightful inheritance by a most flagrant act of usurpation.

Ferdinand's suspicious temper found other grounds for uneasiness, where there was less warrant for it, in his jealousy of his illustrious subject Gonsalvo de Córdova. After the defeat of Ravenna, the pope and the other allies of Ferdinand urged him in the most earnest manner to send the Great Captain into Italy, as the only man capable of checking the French arms, and restoring the fortunes of the league. The king, trembling for the immediate safety of his own dominions, gave a reluctant assent, and ordered Gonsalvo to hold himself in readiness to take command of an army to be instantly raised for Italy. These tidings were received with enthusiasm by the Castilians.

Such was the zeal with which men enlisted under his banner that great difficulty was found in completing the necessary levies for Navarre, then menaced by the French. The king, alarmed at this, and relieved from apprehensions of immediate danger to Naples by subsequent advices from that country, sent orders greatly reducing the number of forces to be raised. But this had little effect, since every man who had the means preferred acting as a volunteer under the Great Captain to any other service, however gainful.

Ferdinand's former distrust of his general was now augmented tenfold by this evidence of his unbounded popularity. He hesitated no longer, but sent instructions to the Great Captain at Córdova to disband his levies, as the expedition would be postponed till after the present winter. Gonsalvo, who understood the motives of this change in the royal purpose, was deeply sensible to what he regarded as a personal affront.

He wrote a letter to the king, in which he gave free vent to his indignation, bitterly complaining of the ungenerous requital of his services, and asking leave to retire to his duchy of Terranova in Naples, since he could be no longer useful in Spain. This request was not calculated to lull Ferdinand's suspicions. He recommended Gonsalvo's return to Loja, at least until some more definite arrangement could be made respecting the affairs of Italy. Thus condemned to his former seclusion, the Great Captain resumed his late habits of life.

Another circumstance which disquieted the Catholic king was the failure of issue by his present wife. The natural desire of offspring was further stimulated by hatred of the house of Austria, which made him eager to abridge the ample inheritance about to descend on his grandson Charles. In order to invigorate his constitution, he resorted to artificial means. The medicines which he took had the opposite effect. Instead of his habitual equanimity and cheerfulness, he became impatient, irritable, and frequently a prey to morbid melancholy. He lost all relish for business, and even for amusements, except field sports, to which he devoted the greater part of his time. The fever which consumed him made him impatient of long residence in any one place, and during these last years of his life the court was in perpetual migration.

In the summer of 1515, he was found one night by his attendants in a state of insensibility, from which it was difficult to rouse him. He exhibited flashes of his former energy after this, however. On one occasion he made a journey to Aragon, in order to preside at the deliberations of the cortes.

On his return to Castile, he learned that the Great Captain was preparing to embark for Flanders. Some surmised that Gonsalvo designed to take command of the papal army in Italy; others, to join himself with the archduke Charles and introduce him, if possible, into Castile. Ferdinand, clinging to power more tenaciously as it was ready to slip of itself from his grasp, had little doubt that the latter was his purpose. He sent orders therefore to the south, to prevent the meditated embarkation, and, if necessary, to seize Gonsalvo's person. But the latter was soon to embark on a voyage where no earthly arm could arrest him.

In the autumn of 1515 he was attacked by a quartan fever. Its approaches at first were mild. His constitution, naturally good, had been invigorated by the severe training of a military life; and he had been so fortunate that, notwithstanding the free exposure of his person to danger, he had never received a wound. But although little alarm was occasioned at first by his illness, he found it impossible to throw it off; and he removed to his residence in Granada, in hopes of deriving benefit from its salubrious climate. Every effort to rally the declining powers of nature proved unavailing; and on December 2, 1515, he expired.

The death of this illustrious man diffused universal sorrow throughout the nation. All envy and unworthy suspicion died with him. The king and the whole court went into mourning.

Gonsalvo, or as he is called in Castilian, Gonzalo Hernández de Córdova, was sixty-two years old at the time of his death. His splendid military successes, so gratifying to Castilian pride, have made the name of Gonsalvo as familiar to his countrymen as that of the Cid. His shining qualities, even more than his exploits, have been often made the theme of fiction. His characteristics were prudence, coolness, steadiness of purpose, and intimate knowledge of man. He understood, above all, the temper of his own countrymen. The Spanish soldier under his hands assumed an entirely new aspect from that which he had displayed in the romantic wars of the Peninsula.

Ferdinand's health, in the meantime, had declined so sensibly that it was evident he could not long survive. His disease had now settled into a dropsy, accompanied with a distressing affection of the heart. He found difficulty in breathing, complained that he was stifled in the crowded cities, and passed most of his time, even after the weather became cold, in the fields and forests, occupied, as far as his strength permitted, with the fatiguing pleasures of the chase. As the winter advanced, he bent his steps towards the south. He passed some time, in December, at a country-seat of the duke of Alva, near Placencia, where he hunted the stag. He then resumed his journey to Andalusia, but fell so ill on the way, at the little village of Madrigalejo, near Truxillo, that it was found impossible to advance further.

The king seemed desirous of closing his eyes to the danger of his situation as long as possible. He would not confess, nor even admit his confessor into his chamber. He showed similar jealousy of his grandson's envoy, Adrian of Utrecht. This person, the preceptor of Charles, and afterwards raised through his means to the papacy, had come into Castile some weeks before, with the ostensible view of making some permanent arrangement with Ferdinand in regard to the regency. The real motive, as the powers which he brought with him subsequently proved, was, that he might be on the spot when the king died, and assume the reins of government. Ferdinand received the minister with cold civility, and an agreement was entered into by which the regency was guaranteed to the monarch, not only during Joanna's life, but his own. Concessions to a dying man cost nothing. Adrian, who was at Guadalupe at this time, no sooner heard of Ferdinand's illness, than he hastened to Madrigalejo. The king, however, suspected the motives of his visit. 'He has come to see me die,' said he; and, refusing to admit him into his presence, ordered the mortified envoy back again to Guadalupe.

At length the medical attendants ventured to inform the king of his real situation, conjuring him if he had any affairs of moment to settle, to do it without delay. He listened to them with composure, and from that moment seemed to recover all his customary fortitude and equanimity. After receiving the sacrament, and attending to his spiritual concerns, he called his attendants around his bed, to advise them respecting the disposition of the government.

The king, it seems had made several wills. By one, executed at Burgos, in 1512, he had committed the government of Castile and Aragon to the infante Ferdinand during his brother Charles's absence. This young prince had been educated in Spain under the eye of his grandfather, who entertained a strong affection for him. The counsellors remonstrated in the plainest terms against this disposition of the regency.

The king was more easily turned than he would once have been. 'To whom then,' he asked, 'shall I leave the regency?' 'To Ximénes, archbishop of Toledo,' they replied. Ferdinand turned away his face, apparently in displeasure; but after a few moments' silence rejoined, 'It is well; he is certainly a good man, with honest intentions. He has no importunate friends or family to provide for. He owes everything to Queen Isabella and myself; and, as he has always been true to the interests of our family, I believe he will always remain so.'

The testament, as finally arranged, settled the succession of Aragon and Naples on his daughter Joanna and her heirs. The administration of Castile during Charles's absence was intrusted to Ximénes, and that of Aragon to the king's natural son, the archbishop of Saragossa, whose good sense and popular manners made him acceptable to the people. He granted several places in the kingdom of Naples to the infante Ferdinand, with an annual stipend of fifty thousand ducats, chargeable on the public revenues. To his queen Germaine he left the yearly income of thirty thousand gold florins, stipulated by the marriage settlement, with five thousand a year more during widowhood. The will contained, besides, several appropriations for pious and charitable purposes, but nothing worthy of particular note. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the various provisions of the testament, it was so long, from the formalities and periphrases with which it was encumbered, that there was scarce time to transcribe it in season for the royal signature. On the evening of January 22, 1516, he executed the instrument; and a few hours later, between one and two of the morning of the 23rd, Ferdinand breathed his last.

Ferdinand was nearly sixty-four years old, of which forty-one had elapsed since he first swayed the sceptre of Castile, and thirty-seven since he held that of Aragon.

Ferdinand's remains were interred, agreeably to his orders, in Granada. His body was laid by the side of Isabella's in the monastery of the Alhambra. The year following, when the royal chapel of the metropolitan church was completed, they were both transported thither. A magnificent mausoleum of white marble was erected over them by their grandson Charles the Fifth.

His education, owing to the troubled state of times, had been neglected in his boyhood. He was esteemed one of the most perfect horsemen of his court. He led an active life, and the only kind of reading he appeared to relish was history.

He was naturally of an equable temper, and inclined to moderation in all things. The only amusement for which he cared much was hunting, especially falconry. He was indefatigable in application to business. He had no relish for the pleasures of the table, and, like Isabella, was temperate even to abstemiousness in his diet. He was frugal. He amassed no treasure.

Ferdinand was devout, at least he was scrupulous in regard to the exterior of religion. Ferdinand has incurred the charge of hypocrisy. His Catholic zeal was observed to be marvellously efficacious in furthering his temporal interests. His most objectionable enterprises, even, were covered with a veil of religion.

Ferdinand, unfortunately for his popularity, had nothing of the frank and cordial temper, the genial expansion of the soul, which begets love.

He carried the same cautious and impenetrable frigidity into private life that he showed in public.

Ferdinand's connexion with Isabella, while it reflected infinite glory on his reign, suggests a contrast most unfavourable to his character. Hers was all magnanimity, disinterestedness, and deep devotion to the interests of her people. His was the spirit of egotism. Ferdinand, in fine, a shrewd and politic prince, may be taken as the representative of the peculiar genius of the age. Isabella, discarding all the petty artifices of state policy, and pursuing the noblest ends by the noblest means, stands far above her age.

CHAPTER XL

ADMINISTRATION, DEATH, AND CHARACTER OF CARDINAL XIMÉNES

1516–1517

TO bring the history to a suitable close, it is necessary to continue the narrative through the brief regency of Ximénes, to the period when the government was delivered into the hands of Ferdinand's grandson and successor, Charles the Fifth.

By the testament of the deceased monarch, Cardinal Ximénez de Cisneros was appointed sole regent of Castile. He met with opposition, however, from Adrian, the dean of Louvain, who produced powers of similar purport from Prince Charles. Neither party could boast a sufficient warrant for exercising this important trust. The misunderstanding which ensued was finally settled by an agreement of the parties to share the authority in common, till further instructions should be received from Charles.

It was not long before they arrived. They confirmed the cardinal's authority in the fullest manner, while they spoke of Adrian only as an ambassador. They intimated, however, the most entire confidence in the latter; and the two prelates continued as before to administer the government jointly.

The first requisition of prince Charles was one that taxed severely the power and popularity of the new regent. This was to have himself proclaimed king, a measure extremely distasteful to the Castilians, who regarded it not only as contrary to established usage, during the lifetime of his mother, but as an indignity to her. It was in vain that Ximénes and the council remonstrated on the impropriety and impolicy of the measure. Charles, fortified by his Flemish advisers, sturdily persisted in his purpose.

One of the regent's first acts was the famous ordinance encouraging the burgesses, by liberal rewards, to enroll themselves into companies and submit to regular military training, at stated seasons. Armed with this strong physical force, the cardinal now projected the boldest schemes of reform, especially in the finances, which had fallen into some disorder in the latter days of Ferdinand. He made a strict inquisition into the funds of the military orders, in which there had been much waste and misappropriation. He suppressed all superfluous offices in the state, retrenched excessive salaries, and cut short the pensions granted by Ferdinand and Isabella.

The foreign administration of the regent displayed the same courage and vigour. Arsenals were established in the southern maritime towns, and a numerous fleet was equipped in the Mediterranean, against the Barbary corsairs. A large force was sent into Navarre, which defeated an invading army of French; and the cardinal followed up the blow by demolishing the principal fortresses of the kingdom, a precautionay measure, to which, in all probability, Spain owes the permanent preservation of her conquest.

The regent's eye penetrated to the farthest limits of the monarchy. He sent a commission to Hispaniola, to inquire into, and ameliorate, the condition of the natives. At the same time he earnestly opposed (though without success, being overruled in this by the Flemish counsellors) the introduction of negro slaves into the colonies, which, he predicted, from the character of the race, must ultimately result in a servile war.

With less satisfaction we contemplate his policy in regard to the Inquisition. As head of that tribunal, he enforced its authority and pretensions to the utmost. He extended a branch of it to Oran, and also to the Canaries, and the New World. In 1512, the new Christians had offered Ferdinand a large sum of money to carry on the Navarrese war, if he would cause the trials before that tribunal to be conducted in the same manner as in other courts, where the accuser and the evidence were confronted openly with the defendant. To this reasonable petition Ximénes objected.

But neither the talents nor authority of Ximénes, it was evident, could long maintain subordination among the people, exasperated by the shameless extortions of the Flemings and the little interest shown for them by their new sovereign. The most considerable offices in church and state were put up for sale; and the kingdom was drained of its funds by the large remittances continually made, on one pretext or another, to Flanders. All this brought odium, undeserved indeed, on the cardinal's government, for there is abundant evidence that both he and the council remonstrated in the boldest manner on these enormities, while they endeavoured to inspire nobler sentiments in Charles's bosom by recalling the wise and patriotic administration of his grandparents. The people, meanwhile, outraged by these excesses, and despairing of redress from a higher quarter, loudly clamoured for a convocation of cortes, that they might take the matter into their own hands. The cardinal evaded this as long as possible. He was never a friend to popular assemblies, much less in the present inflamed state of public feeling, and in the absence of the sovereign.

At length the young monarch, having made all preliminary arrangements, prepared to embark for his Spanish dominions. Previous to this, on August 13, 1516, the French and Spanish plenipotentiaries signed a treaty of peace at Noyon. The principal article stipulated the marriage of Charles to the daughter of Francis the First, who was to cede, as her dowry, the French claims on Naples. The marriage, indeed, never took place. But the treaty itself may be considered as finally adjusting the hostile relations which had subsisted during so many years of Ferdinand's reign with the rival monarchy of France, and as closing the long series of wars which had grown out of the league of Cambray.

On September 17, 1517, Charles landed at Villaviciosa, in the Austurias. The Flemings in Charles's suite looked with great apprehension to his meeting with the cardinal. They had been content that the latter should rule the state when his arm was needed to curb the Castilian aristocracy, but they dreaded the ascendency of his powerful mind over their young sovereign when brought into personal contact with him. They endeavoured to alienate his regards from the minister by exaggerated reports of his arbitrary conduct and temper, rendered more morose by the peevishness of age. Charles, by the persuasions of his evil counsellors, addressed that memorable letter to Ximénes which is unmatched for cool and base ingratitude. He thanked the regent for all his past services, named a place for a personal interview with him, where he might obtain the benefit of his counsels for his own conduct and the government of the kingdom, after which he would be allowed to retire to his diocese and seek from Heaven that reward which Heaven alone could adequately bestow!

Such was the tenor of this cold-blooded epistle, which, in the language of more than one writer, killed the cardinal. This, however, is stating the matter too strongly. Anxiety and disease had already done its work upon his once hardy constitution.

He now became wholly occupied with his devotions. In this tranquil frame of mind, and in the perfect possession of his powers, he breathed his last, November 8, 1517, in the eighty-first year of his age, and the twenty-second since his elevation to the primacy.

This remarkable man, the most remarkable, in many respects of his time, was of that stern and lofty cast which seems to rise above the ordinary wants and weaknesses of humanity. His genius, of the severest order, impresses us with ideas of power that excite admiration akin to terror. His enterprises were of the boldest character, his execution of them equally bold.

Though bred in the cloister, he distinguished himself both in the cabinet and the camp. He had a full measure of the religious bigotry which belonged to the age; and he had scope for displaying it, as chief of that dread tribunal over which he presided during the last ten years of his life.

His regency was conducted on the principles of a military despotism. His first act, the proclaiming of Charles king, was in open contempt of the usages and rights of the nation. His whole policy, indeed, was to exalt the royal prerogative at the expense of the inferior orders of the state. And his regency, short as it was, and highly beneficial to the country in many respects, must be considered as opening the way to that career of despotism which the Austrian family followed up with such hard-hearted constancy.

But, while we condemn the politics, we cannot but respect the principles of the man. He was guided by his sense of duty. It was this, and the conviction of it in the minds of others, which constituted the secret of his great power. His views were raised far above considerations of self. As a statesman, he identified himself with the state; as a churchman, with the interests of his religion.

CHAPTER XLI

GENERAL REVIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA

SPAIN, under the glorious rule of Ferdinand and Isabella, we beheld emerging from chaos into a new existence. Now we briefly survey the principal steps by which the Spanish sovereigns led their nation up to such a height of prosperity and glory.

Ferdinand and Isabella, on their accession, saw at once that the chief source of the distractions of the country lay in the overgrown powers and factious spirit of the nobility. Their first efforts, therefore, were directed to abate these as far as possible. Another practice steadily pursued by the sovereigns was to raise men of humble station to offices of the highest trust.

The Queen's government was equally vigilant in resisting ecclesiastical encroachment. She took more effectual means than any of her predecessors to circumscribe the temporal powers of the clergy. Towards the Roman See, she maintained the same independent attitude.

She was solicitous in watching over the morals of the clergy. By these vigilant measures, she succeeded in restoring the ancient discipline of the church and weeding out the sensuality and indolence which had so long defiled it. She had the inexpressible satisfaction to see the principal places, long before her death, occupied by prelates whose learning and religious principle gave the best assurance of the stability of the reformation.

The condition of the commons under this reign was probably, on the whole, more prosperous than in any other period of the Spanish history. New avenues to wealth and honours were opened to them. Persons and property were alike protected under the fearless and impartial administration of the law. We find no complaints of arbitrary imprisonment and no attempts, so frequent both in earlier and later times, at illegal taxation.

Finally, notwithstanding the perpetual call for troops for the military operations in which the government was constantly engaged, and notwithstanding the example of neighbouring countries, there was no attempt to establish a standing army.

The political franchises of the people, as then understood, were uniformly respected. The number of cities summoned to cortes never fell short of that prescribed by long usage.

In one remarkable particular, which may be thought to form a material exception to the last observations, the conduct of the crown deserves to be noticed. This was the promulgation of *pragmáticas*, or royal ordinances, and that to a greater extent, probably, than under any other reign, before or since. Nothing could be more natural than that the prince should assume such authority, or that the people should acquiesce in the temperate use of it. As far as these ordinances were of an executive character, or designed as supplementary to parliamentary enactments, or in obedience to previous suggestions of cortes, they appear to lie open to no constitutional objections in Castile.

A large proportion of these laws are of an economic character, designed to foster trade and manufactures and to secure fairness in commercial dealings. Many are directed against the growing spirit of luxury, and many more occupied with the organization of the public tribunals.

The commons gained political consideration, no doubt, by the depression of the nobles; but their chief gain lay in the inestimable blessings of domestic tranquillity, and the security of private rights. The crown absorbed the power, in whatever form, retrieved from the privileged orders, the pensions and large domains, the numerous fortified places, the rights of seigniorial jurisdiction, the command of the military orders, and the like. Other circumstances conspired to raise the regal authority still higher, as, for example, the international relations then opened with the rest of Europe. This, indeed, was the direction in which all the governments of Europe, at this period, were tending. This was the revolution of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The Castilian lawyer might despair of a critical acquaintance with the voluminous mass of legislation which, in the form of municipal charters, Roman codes, parliamentary statutes, and royal ordinances, were received as authority in the courts. The manifold evils resulting from this unsettled and conflicting jurisprudence had led the legislature repeatedly to urge its digest into a more simple and uniform system. Some approach was made towards this in the code of the 'Ordenanças Reales', compiled in the early part of the queen's reign. The great body of *Pragmáticas*, subsequently issued, were also collected into a separate volume by her command, and printed the year before her death. These two codes may therefore be regarded as embracing the ordinary legislation of her reign.

In 1505, the celebrated little code called 'Leyes de Toro', from the place where the cortes was held, received the sanction of that body. Its laws, eighty-four in number, and designed as supplementary to those already existing, are chiefly occupied with the rights of inheritance and marriage. But still the great scheme of a uniform digest of the municipal law of Castile, although it occupied the most distinguished jurisconsults of the time, was unattained at the queen's death.

The immense increase of empire, and the corresponding development of the national resources not only demanded new laws, but a thorough reorganization of every department of the administration. To facilitate the despatch of business, it was distributed among a number of bureaus or councils, at the head of which stood the 'royal council'. In order to leave this body more leisure for its executive duties, a new audience, or chancery, as it was called, was established at Valladolid, in 1480, whose judges were drawn from the members of the king's council. A similar tribunal was instituted, after the Moorish conquests, in the southern division of the monarchy; and both had supreme jurisdiction over all civil causes, which were carried up to them from the inferior audiences throughout the kingdom.

The 'council of the supreme' was placed over the Inquisition with a special view to the interests of the crown, an end, however, which it very imperfectly answered, as appears from its frequent collision with the royal and secular jurisdictions. The 'council of the orders' had charge, as the name imports, of the great military fraternities. The 'council of Aragon' was intrusted with the general administration of that kingdom and its dependencies, including Naples; and had besides extensive jurisdiction as a court of appeal. Lastly, the 'council of the Indies' was instituted for the control of the American department.

The greater portion of the laws of this reign are directed, in some form or other, to commerce and domestic industry. Their very large number implies an extraordinary expansion of the national energy and resources.

By a pragmatic of 1500, all persons, whether natives or foreigners, were prohibited from shipping goods in foreign bottoms from a port where a Spanish ship could be obtained. Another prohibited the sale of vessels of a certain tonnage and upwards. The drift of the first of these laws was, as the preamble sets forth, to exclude foreigners from the carrying trade; and the others were equally designed to build up a marine, for the defence, as well as commerce of the country.

A pragmatic passed in 1491, requiring English and other foreign traders to take their returns in the fruits or merchandise of the country, and not in gold or silver, seems to have been designed less to benefit the manufacturer than to preserve the precious metals in the country. It was the same in purport with other laws prohibiting the exportation of these metals, whether in coin or bullion. They were not new in Spain, nor indeed peculiar to her.

The sumptuary laws of Ferdinand and Isabella are prompted in a great degree, no doubt, by the declamations of the clergy against the pomp and vanities of the world. They passed several salutary laws for restraining the ambitious expenditure at weddings and funerals. These provisions had the usual fate of laws of this kind. Some evaded them. Others indemnified themselves for the privation by some other and scarcely less expensive variety of luxury.

The chief exports of the country in this reign were the fruits and natural products of the soil, the minerals, and the simpler manufactures, as sugar, dressed skins, oil, wine, steel, etc. The chief staple of the country was wool. To what extent the finer manufactures were carried, or made an article of export, is uncertain. The vagueness of statistical information in these early times has given rise to much crude speculation and to extravagant estimates of their resources.

A neglect of agriculture is wholly irreconcilable with the general tenor of Ferdinand and Isabella's legislation, which evidently relies on this as the mainspring of national prosperity.

It would be unfair to direct our view to the restrictive measures of Ferdinand and Isabella, without noticing also the liberal tenor of their legislation in regard to a great variety of objects. Such, for example, are the laws encouraging foreigners to settle in the country; those for facilitating communication by internal improvements, roads, bridges, canals, on a scale of unprecedented magnitude; for a similar attention to the wants of navigation; for embellishing and adding in various ways to the accommodations of the cities; for relieving the subject from onerous tolls and oppressive monoplies; for establishing a uniform currency and standard of weights and measures throughout the kingdom; for maintaining a police; for such equal justice as secured to every man the fruits of his own industry, inducing him to embark his capital in useful enterprises; and, finally, for enforcing fidelity to contracts, of which the sovereigns gave such a glorious example in their own administration, as effectually restored that public credit which is the true basis of public prosperity.

While these important reforms were going on in the interior of the monarchy, it experienced a greater change in its external condition by the immense augmentation of its territory. The most important of its foreign acquisitions were those nearest home, Granada and Navarre, at least, they were the ones most capable, from their position, of being brought under control and thoroughly and permanently identified with the Spanish monarchy. Granada was placed under the sceptre of Castile, governed by the same laws, and represented in its cortes.

The other possessions of Spain were scattered over the various quarters of Europe, Africa, and America. Naples was the conquest of Aragon, or, at least, made on behalf of that crown. Naples, like Sicily, continued permanently ingrafted on the kingdom of Aragon.

The most important of the distant acquisitions of Spain were those secured to her by the genius of Columbus and the enlightened patronage of Isabella. But the results actually realized from the discoveries during the queen's life were comparatively insignificant. In a mere financial view, they had been a considerable charge on the crown.

Ferdinand, who enjoyed, by the queen's testament, half the amount of the Indian revenues, was awakened to their importance. Fleets were now fitted out on a more extended scale. The king occasionally took a share in the voyage, independently of the interest which of right belonged to the crown.

In this universal excitement, the progress of discovery was pushed forward with success. The winding depths of the Gulf of Mexico were penetrated, as well as the borders of the rich but rugged isthmus which connects the American continents. In 1512, Florida was discovered by Ponce de León. Solís, who had charge of an expedition projected by Ferdinand to reach the South Sea by the curcumnavigation of the continent, ran down the coast as far as the great Río de la Plata. In 1513, Vasco Núñez de Balboa penetrated across the narrow part of the Isthmus of Darien, and from the summit of the Cordilleras was greeted with the long-promised vision of the southern ocean. This event excited a sensation in Spain, inferior only to that caused by the discovery of America.

As long as Isabella lived, the Indians found an efficient friend and protector; but 'her death', says the venerable Las Casas, 'was the signal for their destruction'. Immediately on that event, the system of *repartimientos*, originally authorized by Columbus, was carried to its full extent in the colonies.

Under the firm but temperate sway of Ferdinand and Isabella, the great changes noticed were effected without convulsion in the state. On the contrary, the elements of the social system which before jarred so discordantly were brought into harmonious action. The restless spirit of the nobles was turned from civil faction to the honourable career of public service, whether in arms or letters. The people at large, assured of the security of private rights, were occupied with the different branches of productive labour. Trade, as is abundantly shown by the legislation of the period, had not yet fallen into the discredit which attached to it in later times. The precious metals, instead of flowing in so abundantly as to palsy the arm of industry, served only to stimulate it.

The foreign intercourse of the country was every day more widely extended. Her agents and consuls were to be found in all the principal ports of the Mediterranean and the Baltic.

The flourishing condition of the nation was seen in the wealth and population of its cities, the revenues of which, augmented in all to a surprising extent, had increased, in some, forty and even fiftyfold beyond what they were at the commencement of the reign.

The resources of the inhabitants were displayed in the palaces and public edifices, fountains, aqueducts, gardens, and other works of utility and ornament. Lavish expenditure was directed by improved taste. Architecture was studied on purer principles than before, and, with the sister arts of design, showed the influence of the new connexion with Italy. A still more decided impulse was given to letters. Ancient seminaries were remodelled; new ones were created. Even the lighter branches of literature felt the revolutionary spirit of the times, and, after yielding the last fruits of the ancient system, displayed new and more beautiful varieties, under the influence of Italian culture.

The accounts of the population at this early period are, for the most part, vague and unsatisfactory. Fortunately, however, we labour under no such embarrassment as regards Castile in Isabella's reign. By an official report to the crown on the organization of the militia, in 1492, it appears that the population of the kingdom amounted to 1,500,000 *vecinos* or householders, or, allowing four and a half to a family (a moderate estimate), to 6,750,000 souls. This census, it will be observed, was limited to the provinces immediately composing the crown of Castile, to the exclusion of Granada, Navarre, and the Aragonese dominions.

The territorial limits of the monarchy, in the meantime, went on expanding beyond example;—Castile and León, brought under the same sceptre with Aragon and its foreign dependencies, Sicily and Sardinia; with the kingdoms of Granada, Navarre, and Naples; with the Canaries, Oran, and the other settlements in Africa; and with the islands and vast continents of America.

Sectional jealousies and antipathies, indeed, were too sturdily rooted to be wholly extinguished; but they gradually subsided, under the influence of a common government, and community of interests. A more enlarged sentiment was infused into the people, who, in their foreign relations, at least, assumed the attitude of one great nation. The names of Castilian and Aragonese were merged in the comprehensive one of Spaniard; and Spain now rose, not to the first class only, but to the first place, in the scale of European powers.

The extraordinary circumstances of the country tended naturally to nourish the lofty, romantic qualities, and the somewhat exaggerated tone of sentiment, which always pervaded the national character. The age of chivalry had not faded away in Spain, as in most other lands.

The Spaniard was a knight-errant, in its literal sense, roving over seas on which no bark had ever ventured, among islands and continents where no civilized man had ever trodden, and which fancy peopled with all the marvels and drear enchantments of romance, courting danger in every form, combating everywhere, and everywhere victorious.

His countrymen who remained at home, feeding greedily on the reports of his adventures, lived almost equally in an atmosphere of romance. A spirit of chivalrous enthusiasm penetrated the very depths of the nation, swelling the humblest individual with lofty aspirations, and a proud consciousness of the dignity of his nature. What wonder that such sentiments should be found incompatible with sober methodical habits of business, or that the nation indulging them should be seduced from the humble paths of domestic industry to a brilliant and bolder career of adventure.

In noticing the circumstances that conspired to form the national character, it would be unpardonable to omit the establishment of the Inquisition, which contributed so largely to counterbalance the benefits resulting from Isabella's government, an institution which has done more than any other to stay the proud march of human reason; which, by imposing uniformity of creed, has proved the fruitful parent of hypocrisy and superstition; which has soured the sweet charities of human life, and, settling like a foul mist on the goodly promise of the land, closed up the fair buds of science and civilization ere they were fully opened. Alas! that such a blight should have fallen on so gallant and generous a people! That it should have been brought on it too by one of such unblemished patriotism and purity of motive, as Isabella!

Under the otherwise beneficent operation of their government, however, the healthful and expansive energies of the state were sufficient to heal these wounds, and still carry it onward in the career of prosperity. With this impulse, indeed, the nation continued to advance higher and higher. The glories of this later period, of the age of Charles the Fifth, as it is called, must find their true source in the measures of his illustrious predecessors. Thus it is, that the seed sown under a good system continues to yield fruit.

The patriot will turn to a period when the nation, emerging from the sloth and license of a barbarous age, seemed to renew its ancient energies, and to prepare like a giant to run its course. He will fix his eye on the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella as the most glorious epoch in the annals of his country.

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